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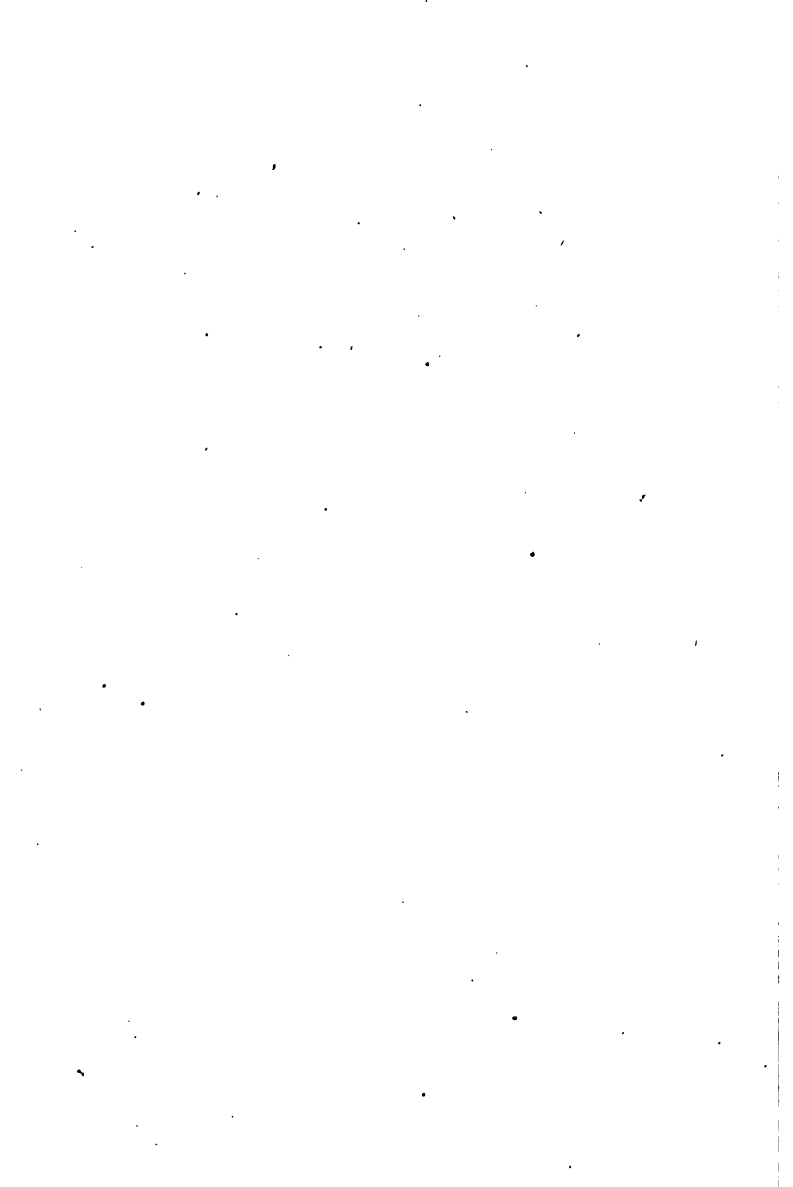
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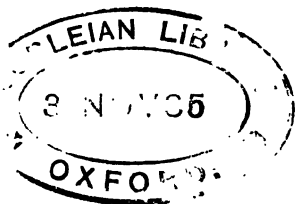
CHAMBERS'S
NATIONAL
READING BOOKS

BOOK II.

W. & R. CHAMBERS
LONDON AND EDINBURGH

1873

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PREFACE.

THE SECOND NATIONAL READING-BOOK is so graduated as to form a fitting sequel to the previous one. Information lessons are more largely introduced. These are on the following subjects : *The Months, the Points of the Compass, the Senses, Animals, Vegetables, Minerals, and Metals.* Interesting narratives have not, however, been omitted, and the book contains a large selection of poetry suited for children at this stage. Special Spelling lessons are given at the end, and instructions in letter-writing, together with a specimen of a letter.

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THE

SECOND NATIONAL READING-BOOK.

THE MONTHS—JANUARY.

Jan'u-ar-y, cov'ered, herds'man, hun'gry, win'dows, gen'tle-man,
haw'thorn, weath'er.

JANUARY is the first month of the year. It is then very cold. The ground is often covered with snow. The pond is frozen over, and the cows may be seen standing in a crowd round it, lowing every now and then, and looking for the herdsman to come and break the ice to let them drink. Out in the field, the hungry sheep are bleating among the frozen turnips. There are no leaves on the trees. The robin-redbreast is perched on the hawthorn spray. There he sits and sings, and sometimes he comes to our windows for crumbs. The snails are fast asleep in their houses, with the doorways shut up, to keep out the cold. The worms are all deep down in the earth, away from the frost and the cold, and the mole—the little gentleman in the velvet coat—is down there too, for he has no great choice of food in such weather. The boys are sliding on the lake, and some of them are skating. It is fine fun for them. They laugh at the cold, for it makes their feet and fingers glow with heat.

THE MONTHS—FEBRUARY.

Feb'ru-ar-y, cro'cus, squir'el, but'ter-flies, ap-pear', o'pen-ing.

FEBRUARY is very cold too, but the days are longer. The rain now comes and thaws the frozen lake. The yellow crocus and the purple crocus, the primrose, and the white snowdrop, lift up their pretty heads. The squirrel wakes out of his winter sleep, and begins to feed on the nuts he has hoarded. He may be seen, balanced by his hind-legs and bushy tail, washing his face on some bare bough near his nest; but at the first sound of the voices of the boys, who come to hunt him, he is off, and springs from tree to tree with the quickness of a bird. Butterflies, that have been hiding all the winter, again appear, and begin to lay their eggs on the opening buds. The farmer now ploughs his fields, and the black rooks follow close after the plough, to pick up the worms it turns up with the earth, and by and by they begin to build their nests. What a noise they make up in the tall trees—caw—caw—caw!





THE SQUIRREL.

The pretty red squirrel lives up in a tree,
A little blithe creature as ever can be ;
He dwells in the boughs where the stock-dove broods,
Far in the shades of the green summer woods ;
His food is the young juicy cones of the pine,
And the milky beech-nut is his bread and his wine.
In the joy of his nature he frisks with a bound
To the topmost twigs, and then down to the ground ;
Then up again, like a winged thing,
And from tree to tree with a vaulting spring ;
Then he sits up aloft, and looks waggish and queer,
As if he would say : ' Ay, follow me here !'
And then he grows pettish, and stamps his foot ;
And then independently cracks his nut ;
And thus he lives the long summer thorough,
Without a care or a thought of sorrow.

But small as he is, he knows he may want,
In the bleak winter weather, when food is scant ;
So he finds a hole in an old tree's core,
And there makes his nest, and lays up his store.
Then when cold winter comes, and the trees are bare,
When the white snow is falling, and keen is the air,
He heeds it not, as he sits by himself,
In his warm little nest, with his nuts on his shelf.
Oh, wise little squirrel ! no wonder that he,
In the green summer woods is as blithe as can be !

LOOK AT BOTH SIDES.

knight, errant, oval, statue, iron, instead, opposite.

In times long ago, there was a class of men called knight-errants, who were clad in coats of mail, and who rode about singly to aid those who might need their help. Once in those old times, two knights, coming from opposite ways, met at a place where a statue was set up.

On the arm of the statue was a shield, one side of which was of iron, and the other side was of brass.

As the two knights came up to the statue from opposite ways, each saw but one side of the shield: one saw the iron side, and the other saw the brass side. The knights bade each other good-day; and one of them made the remark, that if the iron shield of the statue were round instead of oval, he should like it much better.

'Iron shield?' cried the other knight. 'You are mistaken; the shield is made of brass.'

'Oh, no!' said the first knight; 'do you think I cannot tell iron from brass? I say the shield is iron.'

'And I say it is brass,' said the second knight.

'When you say *that*, sir,' cried the first, 'you as much as tell me that I speak what is false.'

Here the two knights grew so very angry, that they began to fight, and both were thrown from their horses.

As the knights lay on the ground, a man came up and told them that the shield of the statue was on one side of iron, and on the other side of brass.

'Ah! then we have been fighting about nothing at all,' groaned the first knight.

'What fools we have been!' said the second.

Before getting into a dispute on a subject, we should look at it well on both sides.

THE DUCK AND THE DRAKE.

par'lour, mu'sic-al, har-mo'ni-ous, night'in-gale, bus'i-ness, re-sist'ed,
scuffled, as-sist'ance, re-solved', sur-prised'.

There was once upon a time a duck and a drake who were very fond of each other. The duck was sitting upon her eggs in the duck-house, which was placed upon a grass plot under the parlour-windows; and the drake was such a good husband, that he staid with her all the time in the duck-house, sitting by her side, and quacking to her.

At length the eggs were hatched, and the little ducklings came out, and then the poor drake was turned out of the duck-house, for fear he should trample upon his children with his great splay feet and hurt them.

The next day he met a hen with a brood of five little chickens. And he took the chickens which were just hatched for his own children. And he wanted to teach them to swim, for the drake always takes that business upon himself. So the drake went up to these poor little chickens, and drove them before him down to the pond, which was at the bottom of the lawn. The hen resisted and scuffled with him as well as she could, but the drake was a great deal stronger than she, and nobody came to her assistance.

The drake was resolved that his little ones should learn to swim, so he pushed them along with his wings spread out, till he made them all go into the pond, where they were all five found dead the next morning, and the drake standing by very much surprised, I daresay, that his children were so stupid as to let themselves be drowned rather than learn to swim.

THE MONTHS—MARCH

fore-fa-thers, vi'o-lets, perfume, distance, dai'sies, daffo-dil,
sun'ni-er, grace'ful.

MARCH is the first month of spring. Our forefathers called it 'March many-weathers,' and said that 'it came in like a lion, and went out like a lamb.' It is a month of sunshine and cloud, and showers of rain, and loud and shrill breezes, which fill the air with clouds of dry dust. On the sunny banks and under the green hedges, the pretty little violets now send forth their sweet perfume, which scents the air to a great distance from the spot where they grow. The daisies now open their eyes and raise their little heads, and the graceful daffodil, which some children call the daffy-down-dilly, is nodding and dancing to the breeze. Some of the birds that have been away to sunnier climes during the winter, now begin to arrive. Among the first to come is a droll-looking fellow in a black wig, which seems too big for his head. He is called the blackcap, and is famous for his sweet song. The blackbird and the thrush have built their nests, and the rooks are building their nests in the trees, and stealing sticks from each other.

Under the green hedges after the snow,
There do the dear little violets grow,
Hiding their modest and beautiful heads
Under the hawthorn in soft mossy beds.

Sweet as the roses, and blue as the sky,
Down there do the dear little violets lie ;
Hiding their heads where they scarce may be seen,
By the leaves you may know where the violet hath been.

THE DAISY.

fa'vour-ite, cheer'ful-ly, shel'tered, joy'ous-ly.

1

The daisy is the meekest flower
That grows in wood or field ;
To wind and rain, and footstep rude,
Its slender stem will yield.

2

And when they're passed away again,
As cheerfully it springs,
As if a playful butterfly
Had bent it with his wings.

3

The daisy is a hardy plant,
And in the winter time
We find it by the sheltered nooks,
Unhurt by snow and rime.

4

In spring it dots the green with white,
It blossoms all the year,
And so it is a favourite flower,
To little children dear.

5

Before the stars are in the sky,
The daisy goes to rest,
And folds its little shining leaves
Upon its golden breast.

6

And so it sleeps in dewy night
Until the morning breaks ;
Then, with the songs of early birds,
So joyously awakes.

THE MARCH WIND.

naught'y, um-brel'la, blus'ter-ing, com-mo'tion, differ-ent,
di-rec'tion, on'ions, con-fu'sion, mis-for'tune, trav-el-ler,
rue'ful, rogue, whis'tle, hand'ker-chief.

Was there ever anything half so naughty as the March wind? It comes upon you all at once; whistles in your ears; blows off your hat; turns your umbrella inside out; and is off round the corner before you can make out what is the matter.

One day a March wind came all in a hurry: blowing, blustering, squalling, by fits and starts, as though it were mad. Where it came from, none could tell. Though no one saw it, a great many heard it and felt it, and a pretty commotion it made, I can tell you.

It entered at one end of the street where the market was held, and, O me! what a hubbub there was before it went out at the other. Like a brave man, it carried all before it. Hats, bonnets, and shawls flew in different directions. Bang went the doors; crash went the case-ments that were open; old women squalled; down fell the stalls; the glass jingled; the apples and onions, gim-cracks and gingerbread nuts, chestnuts, and children, were all mixed together on the pavement.

Lower down, the confusion was still greater; the sheep-pens were scattered; the sheep ran about the streets; the turkeys gobbled; the geese chattered; the fowls flapped their wings and tried to get loose; the farmers stormed; the butchers bellowed; the pigs squealed; the dogs barked; and away went the March wind!

Megg Muggins had a basket of eggs on her head. She was determined to have a shilling a score for them; but the March wind whisked her round, and puffed the

basket off her head. Megg, where are your eggs now? Past all picking up! A sailor passed by at the time. 'Cheer up, my hearty!' cried he; 'worse misfortunes happen at sea.' Megg, in an ill humour, picked up her empty basket; and away went the March wind!

The thatch of John Tomlin's cottage looked rueful, for part of it was carried into the garden. The tabby cat had been watching for a mouse by the water-butt for half an hour: the mouse crept out, and the cat, with her head on her fore-paws, was just going to make a spring, when the March wind puffed off a tile from the roof of the brewhouse. Down it came clattering upon the water-butt; the cat scampered off, the mouse crept under the tub again; and away went the March wind!

The clothes-lines in the garden of Squire Gough were hung with linen; the wind came blustering like a tempest, the lines broke, and the clothes flew into the air. A pocket-handkerchief mounted over the trees into the turnpike road, and was picked up by a poor traveller who wanted one. 'It's an ill wind,' said the poor man, 'that blows nobody good;' so he put the handkerchief into his pocket, continued his journey; and away went the March wind!

At the village school, the boys had just said their last lesson, and the young rogues came tumbling out through the school-room door, some with their hoops, some with their kites, and some tossing their hats into the air. The wind came upon them with a shrill whistle. The kites broke loose, their tails were tangled, the string twined round boys' legs; the hats flew about, one into a pigsty, another into a pond; the hoops trundled along of themselves; the boys set up a shout; and away went the March wind!

THE KITTEN'S MISHAP.

re-hearse', cush'ion, wo'ful-est, vis'age, con-ceive', ap-prov'al, scam'pered, pit'e-ous, re-cov'er.

The tale that I am about to rehearse was told me by Willy, though not told in verse. Said Willy: 'The cat had a kitten, that lay near the head of my bed, on a cushion of hay.


'Well, it happened one day, as I came from my work, before I had put by my rake and my fork, the old cat came up; and she pawed and she mewed, with the wofulest visage that ever I viewed; and she shewed me the door, and she ran in and out: I could not conceive what the cat was about.

'But no sooner she saw me inclined to obey, than she purred her approval, then scampered away to a pond not far off, where the kitten I found in an old broken basket, just sinking, half drowned.

'Perhaps some bad fellow this action had done, to torture the kitten, and then call it fun; but this I don't know. I soon got her out, and a terrible fright she had had, there's no doubt.

''Twas a piteous object. It hung down its head, and Mary, for some time, believed it was dead. But we gave it some milk, and we dried its wet fur, and then—oh! what a pleasure there was in its purr!

'At length, when we saw that all danger was over, and, well warmed and well dried, it began to recover, we laid it in bed on its cushion of hay, and wrapped it up snugly, and bade it good-day. And then the poor mother gave over her mourning, and lay down and purred, like the wheel that was turning.'



THE MONTHS—APRIL, MAY.

hum'ing, blos'soms, swal'low, win'dow, cow'slip, dan-de-li'on,
li'lies, scat'ters, cuck'oo, night'in-gale, skip'ping.

APRIL is a month of shower and sunshine. The trees now begin to shew their green leaves, and to put forth their buds. The bees are busy all day long, humming among the blossoms of the fruit-trees. The bushes are filled with birds, and the swallow is building its nest at the window. Cowslips and daisies, bluebells and lilies of the valley, and the dandelion—by which children tell the hours of the day, by counting the number of puffs it takes to blow off all the downy seed—and many other flowers, are now in bloom, for April showers make May flowers.

April comes with a gentle tread,
A basket of blossoms he bears on his head,
And he scatters them freely o'er hill and dell—
Violet, daisy, and sweet bluebell.

MAY, the merry month of May, is the month of flowers and hawthorn blossoms. The fields and woods are ringing all day long with the songs of birds. The boys, on their way to school, lay down their books to peep under every hedge and bush they pass in search of nests. The lark is singing on its way to the clouds. The voice of the cuckoo is now heard, and the nightingale sings her sweet song in the groves. The little lambs have now grown strong, and are skipping and frisking, and bounding and racing about after each other, and bleating for their mothers.

SONG FOR SPRING.

crea'tures, um'belled, thou'sand, neighs, re-sound'eth.

'Tis Spring! 'tis Spring! all creatures know it ;
The skies, the earth, the waters shew it.

Come, come who will,

Let us take our fill

Of delight in the valley, the field, the hill ;

Let us go to the wood that so late was still ;

The air is ringing

With singing, singing !

The flowers are springing

The lanes along,

The white and the red,

And the umbelled head,

And the single-blowing,

All thickly growing,

This merry May morn, a thousand strong !

The fishes are glad this May morning,

And like things of light,

Through the waters bright,

Flash to and fro !

There's a sound of joy in the youthful Spring—

Hark ! hark !

There sings the lark !

Why tarry we yet ? let's go !

The strong lamb boundeth,

The glad foal neighs ;

And joy resoundeth

A thousand ways—

Over hill and valley, and wood and plain,

Joy poureth down like a shower of rain !

I'll tarry no more ! come, come, let's go !

THE MAY-POLE.

as-sem'bled, cel'e-brate, dec'o-rat-ed, gen'tle-man, ar-range'ments,
fes'ti-val, pos'si-ble, tres'tles, hy'a-cinth, pro-ces'sion, scep'tre,
quoits.

The merry month of May had come, and a large party was assembled at Mr Sandford's country-house to celebrate it. There was to be a pole thirty feet high, decorated with flowers, and there were to be cross-poles from which wreaths were to hang, and at the top of all was to flutter a gay red, white, and blue flag.

A gentleman of the party, who was very learned, knew how May-day used to be kept in England in the olden time, and he agreed to direct the arrangements, and make the festival as like as possible to an old May-day one. After all, it could not be very like, he said.

Early in the morning, the pole was brought and laid across trestles, that it might be decorated with flowers. The village children and young lads who had been asked the night before to go out into the woods, and fields, and lanes to collect flowers, brought abundance of cowslips, primroses, wild hyacinths, violets, and other spring-flowers, but above all, quantities of hawthorn-flowers, both white and red.

Every person in the house helped to dress the May-pole: some tied on the sprays of hawthorn, others made wreaths; some little children handed the flowers, cut the stalks, or cut the pack-thread; so all were busy, and at last the tall pole was covered with garlands of flowers, and the streamer was tied on. The gardener had dug a hole to receive it on the slope of a large field where the

company were to assemble, and workmen had been employed to put up seats, over-arched with May, here and there in the field.

After the children's dinner, they made ready to walk in procession. Robert was dressed in green, and had a bow in his hand, and a bugle at his side, and a quiver at his back, and round his cap he wore a wreath of the flower called Robin Hood, for he was to be Robin Hood. His cousin Rubina, who was on a visit, was dressed in white, and wore a wreath of May-flowers, and carried a large branch of wild-cherry in full bloom in her hand for a sceptre, for she was to be Queen of the May. His cousin Kathleen, who was also there, was dressed in an old-fashioned green dress trimmed with May; a green ribbon across her shoulder, worn as the Queen wears the Order of the Garter; and her golden hair fastened up with green ribbons that fluttered in the wind. She was Maid Marian. One of the gentlemen, who was very stout, had a black dress; his name was Friar Tuck. An excessively tall gentleman was dressed in green, like Robin Hood, and his name was Little John. All the other gentlemen were dressed in green, and were called Foresters, and all had bows, quivers, and hunting-horns. The ladies wore wreaths of May, and most of them had white or green dresses.

It was about four o'clock in the afternoon, when a wagon, used for carrying timber, was drawn up to the door of the house by some countrymen, who all were dressed in snow-white smock-frocks, with May round their hats, and spades over their shoulders. They lifted the May-pole carefully on to the wagon, and then stood ready to drag it.

The music began to play, and the procession marched

to it, through a little wood, which had a path along it just wide enough for the May-pole to pass. It was a pretty sight, and sweet music stole softly by on the bright sunlit air. When the procession reached the field, they saw the villagers assembled there, young and old, men, women, and children, all in their holiday-dress.

The men planted the May-pole firmly in the ground, and a most imposing object it looked, with its graceful wreaths swinging from the ends of the cross-bars, and its gay streamers fluttering in the air.

As soon as the May-pole was safely planted, the men took off their hats and shouted, and hurrahed ! Then Mr Sandford proposed that all should join hands, and dance round the May-pole in one enormous circle ; which was done, and the musicians stood at the foot of the May-pole and played.

After the dance, all amused themselves as they liked : some danced ; some played at quoits ; some at trap-ball or prisoners' base ; some walked about, chatting gaily with their friends ; while the very old sat on the benches and chatted to each other, and looked on at the scene.

By and by, tea was brought out, and served to all the villagers. There were baskets full of cake and buns, to the great delight of the village children, and the villagers sat in groups on the grass, and drank tea and coffee. After that, they danced round the May-pole as the moon came out, till by degrees they each and all went home delighted with their holiday.



THE FLAX-FLOWER.

O the little flax-flower,
It groweth on the hill,
And, let the breeze awake or sleep,
It never standeth still.
It groweth, and it groweth fast ;
One day it is a seed,
And then a little blade of grass,
Scarce better than a weed ;
But soon comes out the flax-flower,
As blue as is the sky ;
And ' 'Tis a dainty little thing !'
We say, as we go by.

It is a dainty little thing ;
It groweth for the poor,
And many a mother blesses it,
Beside her cottage-door.
It seemeth all astir with life,
As if it loved to thrive ;
As if it had a merry heart
Within its stem alive !
Then blessings on the flax-field,
And may the kindly showers
Give strength unto the shining stem,
Give seed unto the flowers !



THE MONTHS—JUNE, JULY.

tu'lips, lil'ies, gar'ments, chest'nut, beau'ti-ful, la-bur'num, lil'ac, po'sies, pleas'ant, cur'rants, straw'ber-ries, scythe.

JUNE, 'the leafy month of June,' is the first month of summer. It is called 'the month of roses,' for roses, tulips, and lilies are now in flower. Everywhere the trees and flowers are clothed in their richest garments. The chestnut is covered with clusters of buds, and beautiful tassels hang down from the laburnum and lilac. The children's hands are now filled with posies or bunches of beautiful flowers, which they have plucked in the field, under the hedges in the green lanes, on the sunny banks, or under the shade of the great trees in the wood. The haymakers are hard at work in the fields. The mower whets his scythe, and cuts down the grass, and the haymakers shake it up with their forks, and the pleasant smell of the new-mown hay is carried on the wind to the far-away fields and villages it sweeps by.

JULY is the warmest month of the year. It is 'the sweet summer-time, when the leaves are green and long.' All the early garden fruits, the gooseberries and currants, are now ripe. The pretty strawberries peep out from their beds, and the rich red cherries hang down from the trees. This is the time when the sheep are shorn of the thick fleece of wool, which has kept them warm during the colder months. But in the hot days of July the sheep are glad to get rid of their heavy coats. So the farmer takes them to the stream to be washed. Then he takes his long shears and cuts off all the wool. The sheep are then quite bare, and feel very cool.

S U M M E R.

glad'some, quick'ened, a'zure, grass'hop-per, ru'bies, crystal,
nec'tar-ines, mead'ows.

1.

I am the gladsome Summer !
I wake to life the flowers
That my sister Spring has quickened
With her soft and gentle showers.

2.

I am the gladsome Summer !
All insects love me well ;
The green and azure dragon-flies
Come out with me to dwell ;
And the bees are ever humming
Their grateful songs to me,
While the cricket and the grasshopper
Chirp loud and merrily.

3.

I am the gladsome Summer !
For me their fullest suits
The trees put on ; I ripen
And pluck the early fruits.
Here are cherries red as rubies,
Here are currants crystal clear ;
And strawberries, and peaches,
And nectarines, are here.

4.

I am the gladsome Summer !
Not a song-bird of the grove
But loves my cheerful sunshine,
And tells me of that love:

Not a fish within the river
But moves his silver scales
With fresh delight, whenever
I breathe upon the gales.

5.

I am the gladsome Summer !
The friend of children, I ;
How, in my sunny meadows,
They love at length to lie !
How, in my shady woodlands,
They love to sport and roam,
And find in every bower
A resting-place, a home !

THE FALL OF THE ACORN.

a'corn, pump'kin, pro-duce', splen'did, ap-pear'ance, cert'ain-ty.

A man was lying in the shade of an oak-tree, and looking at a pumpkin which was growing in a garden close by. He shook his head, and said : ' Well, well ! Here seems to be a mistake. It does not appear quite right to me that the little creeping pumpkin-vine should produce such a large, splendid fruit, and the large, noble oak-tree should bring forth such a poor little one. Now, if I had made the world, the oak-tree should have made a splendid appearance, with large pumpkins as yellow as gold, and heavy as a cannon-ball.'

Hardly had he said this, when an acorn dropped from the tree, and struck him so sharply on the nose as to make it bleed. He started to his feet, and exclaimed : ' It is all right, after all ! If this acorn had been a pumpkin, my head would have been broken, to a certainty !'



THE MONTHS—AUGUST, SEPTEMBER.

or'chard, goose'ber-ries, sick'les, par'tridge.

AUGUST and SEPTEMBER are the months of harvest. You will see in the picture the reapers cutting a field of corn. See how active they are, stooping with their sickles, and cutting bunches of the stalks. See also how a man behind them is binding the sheaves, which are afterwards taken on carts to the barn-yard of the farmer. After the corn has been taken to the barn-yard, and the ears have been thrashed, to loosen the grains from the straw, the grains are ground in a mill, and become flour or meal, which is made into bread for us to eat.

In these months also the fruit is ripe on the trees of the orchard—plums, and pears, and apples; and gooseberries and currants are ripe too on the bushes in the garden. Sportsmen now take their guns and go out to the moors and fields to shoot the grouse and the partridge.

SEPTEMBER.

boun'ti-ful, re-mem'ber, gor'geous, e-nough'.

There are twelve months throughout the year,

From January to December—

And the primest month of all the twelve

Is the merry month of September !

Then apples so red

Hang overhead,

And nuts ripe-brown

Come showering down

In the bountiful days of September !

There are flowers enough in the summer-time,

More flowers than I can remember—

But none with the purple, gold, and red

That dyes the flowers of September !

The gorgeous flowers of September !

And the sun looks through

A clearer blue,

And the moon at night

Sheds clearer light

On the beautiful flowers of September !

The poor too often go scant and bare,

But it glads my soul to remember

That 'tis harvest-time throughout the land

In the bountiful month of September !

Oh ! the good kind month of September !

It giveth the poor

The growth of the moor ;

And young and old,

'Mong sheaves of gold,

Go gleaning in rich September !

THE MONTHS—OCTOBER, NOVEMBER, DECEMBER.

brew'ing, be-gin'ning, coun'tries, pheas'ant, sports'man, gloom'i-est,
re-main', Christ'mas.

OCTOBER is the month of nuts and hops. This is the time to gather the nuts that have fallen from the trees, and to pick the hops, which are used in the brewing of ale. The trees now look very pretty in their autumn dress of green, brown, and yellow, but the leaves are beginning to fall off. The flowers are almost all gone. The swallow and its young ones, and other birds, fly away to warmer countries.

The pheasant, a large beautiful bird, with scarlet eyes, and red and green and purple feathers, is now the mark of the sportsman; and the hare may be seen running across the fields, trying to escape from the hounds, which are in hot chase after it.

NOVEMBER is the gloomiest month of the year. It is the season of fogs and rain and blasts of wind, which shake down the leaves that still remain on the trees.

DECEMBER is the last month of the year. Then it is cold and chill, and the ground is often covered with snow and ice. Towards the end of this month is Christmas, which is a happy, merry time. Then boys and girls go home from school, and watch with delight the stoning of plums, the paring of apples, and the chopping of meat for the mince-pies and plum-puddings, which are to be seen at Christmas. After this January comes again, bringing in the New-year.

THE MONTHS.

daffo-dil, prim'rose, a'pri-cots, pheas'ant, pleas'ant.

January brings the snow,
Makes our feet and fingers glow.

February brings the rain,
Thaws the frozen lake again.

March brings breezes loud and shrill,
Stirs the dancing daffodil.

April brings the primrose sweet ;
Scatters daisies at our feet.

May brings flocks of pretty lambs,
Skipping by their fleecy dams.

June brings tulips, lilies, roses,
Fills the children's hands with posies.

Hot July brings cooling showers,
Apricots and gilly-flowers.

August brings the sheaves of corn,
Then the harvest home is borne.

Warm September brings the fruit,
Sportsmen then begin to shoot.

Fresh October brings the pheasant,
Then to gather nuts is pleasant.

Dull November brings the blast,
Then the leaves are whirling fast.

Chill December brings the sleet,
Blazing fire and Christmas treat.

THE BRAVE BOY.

en'gine, mo'tion, baf'fle, diz'zy, fur'nace, struc'ture, tot'ter,
oc-curred', pass'en-ger, lis'tened, ex-claimed', con'duct, pres'ence.

There are few sights which fill the mind with greater wonder than a huge railway train with its immense engine, heavy tender, and perhaps ten or fifteen carriages, moving at the rate of twenty or thirty miles an hour. The fierce shriek of the engine, the thunder of the carriages, and the swift motion, all join to deafen the ear, baffle the eye, and make the brain dizzy. But, fearful as such rapid motion may seem, the passengers generally travel in the carriages in safety and comfort. The wheels run upon the iron rails, and the carriages are drawn along with great ease.

Railways cross rivers and streams by means of bridges, which are built sometimes of stone, sometimes of iron, but often of wood. Wooden bridges are always in danger of fire from the sparks and ashes which drop from the furnace.

Not long ago a wooden bridge took fire from the sparks of a train which passed over it during the night. In the morning the smoke was seen rising in the air. Soon a cry was heard: 'Fire! fire! The railway bridge is on fire!' There was a rush to the spot. The people around came in crowds. The bridge was found to be all in flames. The fire had gained such strength that nothing could be done to check it. The whole structure soon began to totter. In an hour it fell, a blazing mass of ruins, into the river below.

Among the crowd that had come to see the sight was a boy about twelve years of age. While looking at the

timbers, as they lay smoking and hissing in the water, it occurred to his mind that it was just the time for the morning passenger-train to come along the road. The boy knew that if the train should not receive notice of the fall of the bridge, the engine, the carriages, and the passengers would all be hurled into the river. He listened.

‘The passenger-train is due!’ exclaimed he. ‘It is coming! I hear the carriages!’ Without an instant’s delay he started off at his utmost speed. About two hundred yards from the bridge the railway made a curve. As soon as the boy reached this curve, the train was seen coming on, under full steam.

The lad was at a loss how to attract the notice of the persons in charge of the train. He knew they would not stop a train under full headway at a mere signal from a boy: they would think that it was only a childish trick. Without a thought of the danger, the noble little fellow placed himself just in the middle of the track, and ran as fast as he could toward the train, raising his hands, swinging his arms, and using all means to attract notice. The carriages came rushing toward him with a noise like thunder. In one instant more he would have been crushed. But by good fortune he was seen in time. The train was stopped.

‘The bridge! the bridge!’ was all he could at first utter; adding, as he gained breath, ‘the bridge is burned! the bridge is gone!’

The conduct of this brave boy, who risked his own life to save the lives of others—and those others, strangers—is an instance of the noblest courage and presence of mind.

THE FLY.

fel'low, win'dow, hur'ries, min'ute, good-bye'.

1.

What a sharp little fellow is Mr Fly ;
He goes where he pleases, low or high,
And can walk just as well with his feet to the sky,
As I can on the floor.

2.

At the window he comes with a buzz and a roar,
And o'er the smooth glass with ease he can pass,
Or through the keyhole of the door.

3.

He eats the sugar, and goes away,
Nor ever once asks how much is to pay ;
And sometimes he crosses the tea-pot's steam,
And comes and plunges his head in the cream.

4.

Then on the edge of the jug he stands,
And cleans his wings with his feet and hands ;
This done, through the window he hurries away,
And gives a buzz, as if to say :
' At present I have not a minute to stay,
But will peep in again in the course of the day.'

5.

Then away he will fly
Where the sunbeams lie,
And not stop to shake hands,
Nor to bid one good-bye.

LAURA MANNERS'S BIRTHDAY.

re-mem'ber, rec-ol-lect', car'riage, coun'try, re-joic'ing, beau'ti-ful, fright'ened, daffo-dils, to-geth'er, or'chard, blos'som, ar'bour.

My name is Laura Manners ; I was seven years of age last birthday, which was on the first of May. I remember only four birthdays. The day I was four years old is the first that I recollect. On the morning of that day, as soon as I awoke, I crept into mother's bed, and said : ' Open your eyes, mother, for it is my birthday. Open your eyes, and look at me ! ' Then my mother told me I should ride in a carriage, and see my grandmother and my sister Sarah. Grandmother lived at a farm-house in the country, and I had never in all my life been to see her.

How happy was I now at the thought of my ride ! I ran about the house talking of where I was going, and rejoicing so much, that when I got into the carriage I was tired, and fell asleep. When I awoke, I saw the green fields on both sides of the carriage ; and the fields were full, quite full, of bright, shining, yellow flowers ; and sheep and young lambs were feeding in them. I clapped my hands together for joy. The trees, the fences, and the hedges seemed to fly swiftly by us. One field, and the sheep, and the young lambs passed away ; and then another field came, and that was full of cows ; and there was no end of these charming sights till we came quite to grandmother's house.

Grandmother was very glad to see me ; and my sister Sarah shewed me all the beautiful places about the house. She first took me into the farm-yard, and I peeped into the barn ; there I saw a man thrashing ; and as he beat

the wheat, he made such a noise, that I ran away. Then Sarah shewed me the pond where the ducks were swimming, and the little wooden houses where the hens slept at night. And there were some little yellow ducklings that had a hen for their mother. She was so frightened if they went near the water !

We went out of the farm-yard into the orchard. Oh, what a sweet place grandmother's orchard is ! There were pear-trees, and apple-trees, and cherry-trees, all in blossom ; and among the grass under the trees there grew buttercups, and cowslips, and daffodils, and bluebells. Sarah told me all their names, and she said I might pick as many of them as I pleased. I filled my lap with flowers, and I carried as many as I could in both my hands.

From the orchard I went to the garden, and a most beautiful garden it was ; long and narrow, a straight gravel-walk down the middle of it ; and at the end of the gravel-walk there was a green arbour with a bench under it. And there were grape-vines that climbed over the arbour ; and the scent of their blossoms was sweeter than I can tell you. And I sat on the bench and rested myself for some minutes, while the birds sang sweetly.

On one side of this charming garden there were a great many bee-hives. Mother said : ' Have you nothing to say to these pretty bees, Laura ? ' Then I said to them :

' How doth the little busy bee
Improve each shining hour,
And gather honey all the day
From every opening flower ! '

They had a most beautiful flower-bed to gather it from, quite close under the hives. I was going to catch one

bee, till Sarah told me about their stings, which made me afraid for a long time to go too near their hives; but I went a little nearer every day, and before I came away from grandmother's, I looked in over the glass windows at the top of the hives, to see the bees make honey in their own home. After seeing the garden, I saw the cows milked, and that was the last sight I saw that day; for while I was telling my mother about the cows, I fell fast asleep, and I suppose I was then put to bed. But I shall not soon forget that happy birthday.

NORTH, SOUTH, EAST, WEST.

tow'ard, al'ways, dis-ap-pear', peo'ple, car'din-al, prin'ci-pal.

What o'clock is it? It is twelve o'clock. It is noon. Now, where is the sun? Turn your face toward it. Look at the sun. You will see it in the south. Always when it is twelve o'clock, and you look at the sun, your face is toward the south; your back is toward the north, your left hand is toward the east; and your right hand is toward the west.

In the morning, when it is going to be light, you will see the sun rise in the east, for the sun always rises in the east. In the evening, when it is going to be night, if you look to the west, you will see the sun set, or disappear from our sight, for the sun always sets in the west.

Though we do not see the sun at night, the sun does not cease to shine. It shines on the people who live on the other side of the earth. When it is night with us, it is their day, and when it is day with us, it is night with them.

North, South, East, and West are called the four cardinal points—that is, the principal or chief points.

LOVE OF FLOWERS.

but'ter-cup, beau'teous, dah'lia, mar'i-gold, pur'ple, heath'er,
moun'tain, hol'ly-hock.

1.

Oh, Maggie loves the lily fair,
And Annie loves the rose ;
But John, and I, and Willie too,
Love every flower that blows !

2.

We love the golden buttercup ;
We love the daisy white ;
The violet blooming in the shade,
And the roses in the light.

3.

And the lily that, so like a queen,
Lifts up its beauteous head ;
And the dahlia, and the tulip tall,
Of every hue and shade.

4.

The wallflower and the marigold,
And pretty London-pride ;
And the bluebell hanging down its head,
Its laughing eye to hide.

5.

And the purple heather climbing round
The bonnie Scottish hills ;
And the little primrose springing up
Beside the mountain rills.

6.

And the hollyhock that turns about
Its head to seek the sun ;
Oh, dearly do we love the flowers,
And we love them every one !

7.

Far better than our painted toys,
Though gilded bright and gay,
We love the gentle flowers that bloom
In the sunny summer day.

THE RAVEN THAT HAD A DINNER-PARTY.

New-ha'ven, Ash'bourn, pas'sen-gers, op-er-a'tion, am-bi'tion,
nu'mer-ous, com'pa-ny, con-se-quen'tial-ly, re-gal'ing.

There was a raven kept, a few years ago, at Newhaven, at an inn on the road between Buxton and Ashbourn. This bird had been taught to call the poultry, and could do it very well too. One day—the table being set out for the coach passengers' dinner—the cloth was laid, with the knives and forks, spoons, mats, and bread, and in that state it was left for some time, the room-door being shut, though the window was open.' The raven had watched the operation very quietly, and, as we may suppose, felt a strong ambition to do the like.

When the coach was just arriving, the dinner was carried in ; but, behold ! the whole of the things on the dinner-table had vanished—silver spoons, knives, forks—all gone. But what was the surprise and amusement to see, through the open window, upon a heap of rubbish in the yard, the whole array very carefully set out, and the raven performing the honours of the table to a numerous company of poultry which he had summoned about him, and was very consequentially regaling with bread !

THE CRUST OF BREAD.

re-mem'ber, re-mained', ploughed, strewed, la'bour-er, trem'bling, de-voured', hav'oc, break'fast, un-mer'ci-ful-ly, hap'pened, dough.

The first thing I can remember was when I was only a grain of corn, lying in a large room, with a great many other grains. We remained there a long time; when one day a man came and took out a number of us. He put us into a sack, and carried us to a field that had just been ploughed, and there he took us out of the sack, and strewed us in handfuls on the ground.

I shall never forget how sweet and fresh the newly ploughed earth smelt, and how much I enjoyed lying there with the warm sunbeams shining on me. Soon after there came by a flight of crows, and, the labourers being away, they alighted on the ground and began picking up all the grains of corn within their reach. I lay trembling with alarm, thinking my turn would come, and that I too should be devoured; but before they reached the spot where I was, the labourers returned to the field and frightened them away. Soon after there was a shower of rain, and some of the drops fell upon me, and carried me down with them into the ground, where I was quite safe from the birds.

There I remained some time: but I found that I began to swell and grow so large, that at last my skin could not hold me; so it burst open, and out there came at one end a little tuft of small roots scarcely larger than hairs; these struck into the ground and grew downwards. At the other end, out came several tiny green stalks, which grew above the ground. At first they looked like blades

of grass; but they soon became taller and taller, and stronger and stronger, and at last a beautiful ear of corn was seen at the top, and a few long leaves, like those of grass, grew on the sides of each stalk.

Thus, from a small seed of corn, I was changed into a little plant; and a very pretty change it was. The little roots sucked in water, which went up all through my green veins into the ears, and made them swell, and grow large, and full of seeds. Then, when the hot weather came, the sun turned us as yellow as gold, and the wind blew us about with the other ears of corn that grew in the same field, and I assure you we all felt very proud of our grace and beauty. But our pride did not last long; for one day a number of men came into the field with sickles, and cut us all down.

We were then bound up in sheaves and set upright on the ground, leaning one against the other for support; for, being separated from our roots in the ground, we were no longer able to stand upright. We remained some days and nights on the ground, and then we were put into a large cart, and carried to the rick-yard to be stacked. There we were left quiet for some time, except that a frightful rat now and then found its way into the stack, and made great havoc amongst us, devouring as many of us as he could swallow for his breakfast. After some time a number of men came again and pulled us down, and, spreading us upon the floor of a barn, began beating us most unmercifully with double sticks, called flails.

Their hard blows drove us all out of the ears in which we grew. The stalks, which were then nothing but straw, were taken away; but the grains of corn, with the chaff, were put into a large flat basket, and shaken about till

the chaff was all blown away, and nothing but the grains remained.

I was but a single grain when I was first sown in the ground, but I sprung up with so many fine ears, that I do believe I had above two hundred seeds ; no others were so plump and well grown as ourselves. Well, the next thing that happened to us was being sent to the mill to be ground all to pieces to make flour ; and after that to the baker, who mixed us up with water and yeast, and made us into a piece of dough, and, after we had been well kneaded, he put us into an oven to bake. We thus became part of a loaf of bread which the baker's boy brought here to-day to be eaten.

THE WATER-DROP.

sol'i-tar-y, e-nor'mous, oys'ter, swallowed, At-lan'tic, hum'ble.

A drop of rain, one solitary drop, fell from a cloud into the sea, and was swallowed by the enormous waste of waters, in the bosom of the Atlantic. Lost in the depths of the ocean, the little drop said to itself : ' Ah ! what a tiny thing am I in this great world of water ! '

It happened that just at this moment an oyster opened its shelly mouth, and swallowed the water-drop. It lay a long time in its pearly home. By degrees it ripened into a beautiful pearl.

At length it was found by a diver, and, after many a change, it became the gem which glitters in the crown of an eastern king !

Repine not, humble one, wherever thy lot is cast, and however lowly it may be. Thou knowest not what glory there is yet in store for thee.

THE SKYLARK.

pleas'ant, ex-cept', sum'mer, flow'ers, beau'ti-ful.

1.

It is a pleasant thing
To walk at early day,
To see the pretty flowers,
And smell the sweet new hay.

2.

The sun is warm and bright,
The sky is clear and blue,
And all the trees and flowers
Are wet with drops of dew.

3.

Hush ! don't you hear the bird
That's singing in the sky ?
No bird except the lark
Would fly so very high.

4.

It left its little nest
When day was just begun,
And flew so high to bid
Good-morning to the sun.

5.

' Good-morning, shining sun,'
I think the lark would say ;
' I'm happy in my heart,
This fine warm summer day.

6.

'I'm very glad you're come,
You make the world so light,
And all the trees and flowers
So beautiful and bright.

7.

'I'll sing a merry song,
And then fly down to rest,
Or search for worms to feed
My young ones in the nest.'

8.

The lark has done its song,
And settled on the ground,
But we will not forget
The sweet and happy sound.

9.

And when our hearts are glad,
In long bright summer days,
To God in heaven we'll sing
Our songs and hymns of praise.





THE LITTLE GIRL OF THE LIGHT-HOUSE.

build'ing, u'su-al-ly, ves'sel, is'land, ex-cept', weath'er, a-muse',
se-vere', dan'gers, ex-posed', min'ute, anx'ious.

A light-house is a high building in the form of a pillar, with stairs leading to the top. It is usually built near the coast of the sea, or on the shore of a lake ; and every night a lamp is lighted in the top. The lamp is lighted to shew to those who may sail so near it as to see the flame in the night, that they should not come too near, lest their vessel should be dashed in pieces on the rocks or sands.

There was once a little girl named Ellen, who lived with her father on a small island, on which there was a light-house. Her father kept this light-house, and lighted the lamp every night. There were no persons but those

belonging to the light-house who lived on that island. Ellen's mother and sisters had been drowned at sea ; so she was quite lonely, and had no little friends to play with, except a kitten and a dog. But she was very happy, and her father was very fond of her.

One day the man who helped her father to keep the light-house left him, and her father said he must take the boat, and go to the town, two miles off, and hire another man. He asked Ellen if she would be afraid to stay alone till the afternoon. She said : ' O no ! She could climb about the rocks, pick up stones on the sand, and watch the clouds. She could amuse herself in many ways.'

And so her father got into his boat, and sailed away to the town. Ellen sat and read one of her little books for some time ; then she went out upon the rocks, and looked at the small vessels that were sailing about. Soon the weather changed, and dark clouds began to hide the sun. The wind blew a gale, and the waves rolled over the rocks quite up to the foot of the light-house. Ellen ran in, and went up to the top, and looked out through the glass windows. She thought of the poor sailors ; and then she thought of her father, and hoped he would not try to set sail from the town in such a storm. The wind did not stop blowing. Hours passed by, and the storm grew more severe.

At length it was time for the lamp of the light-house to be lighted. Ellen had never done this ; she was not seven years old ; but she had often seen her father light the lamp, and she thought that she could do it, and that she ought to do it. So she fixed it as she had seen her father do, and then struck a match, and lighted the wick. She felt quite proud when she saw the light shedding its rays over the rough waters. She then gave the dog

and the kitten their supper, and took her own, and lay down to rest.

But she could not sleep, for thinking of the storm, and the dangers to which the poor sailors were exposed. She looked out, and saw that there was a thick fog over the water, and she feared that it might hide the light of the light-house from the sailors. So she rose, and went and pulled the fog-bell, which was used to make the sailors hear when they could not see. She would pull it for a minute, and then rest; and she did this till the fog was blown away, and the bright stars shone out in the sky. Then she lay down on her little bed, and went to sleep.

All this while her father had been very anxious about her. He wanted to set sail from the town in the midst of the storm, but his friends would not let him do it. How glad he was when he saw the bright light stream forth from the light-house, telling him that Ellen was safe, and had known what to do! And when he heard the bell, he said she was a brave little girl.

Early in the morning he set sail for the island. The storm was over. He went up into Ellen's little room, and waked her with a kiss. It was a joyful meeting.

On the beach we walked,
Little Charles and I,
And together talked
Of the starry sky.
Soon another star,
As it seemed to be,
All at once afar,
Shone above the sea.

Then said little Charles:
"Tis no star so bright;
Now I see it is
But the light-house light.
It will guide the ships,
On the sea that roam,
Far from rocks and sands,
Safely to their home!"

BOXIE (1).

Christ'mas, coun'try, ge-og'ra-phy, moun'tains, vi'o-lets, myr'tle, lamb'kins, hap'pened, Stafford, Rug'by, port-man'teau, leath'ern.

I am a box, a Christmas box, and I came a long way by railway. I wonder whether you have ever been where I came from? It was Wales; and such a pretty place! Wales is that country, you know—— But there—look on your map! I don't know much about geog—geog—— O dear! what do you call it? Geogra—geography. That's it! You can tell me more about it than I can, I daresay, because you go to school, and there you learn. I only know that there are mountains in Wales—you may call them hills, if you like a shorter word—and that there are rivers there with great stones in them; and that the water bubbles over these stones, and goes 'Bub, bub! hiss, hiss! spot, spot! spray, spray!' whilst it tumbles down again. And I have seen ferns in Wales, and moss, and heath, and furze; and roses, and violets, and myrtle; and there is such nice rich cream there, and such dear little fairy sheep, only half the size of those that are feeding in the park: it is quite pretty to see them skip about, and to hear them call out to their lambkins: 'Baa, baa, baa!'

But you don't want to hear where I came from. You want to hear what I am. Well, then, I will say again I am a box, and a Christmas box, and I came a long way by railway. And what do you think happened on my road here? Why, they left me behind! They did, indeed, and I will tell you how it was.

I came up with my aunt—at least, not *my* aunt, because boxes have no aunts, you know, which is a great

pity, for I think aunts are very nice ; but I came up with my little Lotty's aunt, and that is the same thing. Well, she saw the porters put me into the van when she set out, and she came to look at me when the train stopped half-way. I was quite safe, and she was very glad. But—O dear, O dear!—at the end of the day, when she told the man to put me, and a big box she had, on a cab, to take me home, the man could not find us anywhere !

'Dear, dear !' aunt cried. 'I don't care for my clothes, but Lotty's box ! Whatever will my quiet little Lotty say ?'

She was obliged to go home without me. The porter said I was not lost, only left behind, perhaps at Stafford, perhaps at Rugby ; because, at Christmas, the trains were so heavy and so long. And the porter was sure I should be sent on by and by ; and so I was. They did send me on, and badly I was knocked about, I can tell you ! I was taken and shaken, and bumped and thumped ; and I creaked and squeaked, I was so angry ; and if I could have jumped out of the cord that bound me, I would, for I thought I should have been broken into twenty little bits. Look inside of me, and you will find a great crack. Do you see it ? That was done by a man who kicked me hard against the corner of a leathern portmanteau. It hurt me so ! for I am not tough and rough, and strong and long, and thick and quick, like some things. I am small and young ; and people ought to be very gentle and tender with the little ones. Oughtn't they ?

And I did not get straight to Lotty's house when I was taken out of the van at the station. I was put into a cart the next morning, and then something went wrong again, and I will tell it you. Only keep very slow and quiet, please, because this will make you sorry, and perhaps you will even cry.

BOXIE (2).

knocked, black'ber-ry, car'riages, om'ni-bus, hos'pi-tal, po-lice'man,
bit'ter-ly, ob-liged', twink'ling.

There was a man in the cart to drive, whose name was George, and with him he had a boy, John. John jumped in and out of the cart, and knocked at the people's doors, and carried the parcels in, if they were not too heavy, whilst Mr George sat still; and if the parcels were big parcels, like boxes, or trunks, or great hampers with geese and turkeys in them, and mince-pies and pots of blackberry jam, too large for John to lift, then Mr George took them, and he gave the reins to Johnny, and Johnny stopped in the cart. Well, they had been to a great many houses, forty, I should say, when they had to drive up a hill. It was a bridge; that was why it went up a little and then down a little, and was just the same as if it were a hill; and under the bridge there ran first a canal, and then a railway, and there were a great many carts, and wagons, and carriages, and cabs, always going very quickly over.

Mr George said to Johnny: 'There's no frost to-day, boy, but the mud is very bad to make the horse slip;' and those were the last words Johnny heard. The next moment an omnibus ran up very close. Mr George had to pull his horse sharply to get out of the way, and down it slipped, and 'shock!' went the cart, breaking the shafts, and we all went 'rush!' against poor Johnny, and threw him hard and sharp into the road.

Poor Johnny, who had been so strong and happy only a moment before! Poor little white fainting boy! Some kind people lifted him up, for one ran directly and held

the horse's head, and another helped Mr George down, and a great many ran round the cart, ready to do any handy thing they could, and they picked all of us off Johnny—I was right on his poor chest—and they said that he was hurt and bleeding very much.

‘We’ll take him to the hospital,’ said a policeman; and they set him in a cab, and went along very slowly, so as not to shake him, and they took him away.

I wonder what his mother said when they went to tell her all about it, and when they told her both his legs were broken, as they were, and that it would be a long time before he could go home to sleep, and before he would be able to walk, and run, and jump, and play again! I daresay she cried very bitterly. Very bitterly; because Johnny earned money for her too, and he could not earn anything whilst his legs were broken, and whilst he was in bed in the hospital. Did I not tell you, you would be very sorry to hear all about the cart and little Johnny?

My little Lotty was very sorry. She did not know of it till the next day, though, for I was obliged to be kept from her, you see, one night more. As the cart was broken, it could not go on, and all of us were carried to the railway place under the bridge, and stacked up there on the platform. There was such a noise with the trains! there were so many parcels, and porters, and people, and policemen! I was so glad to get at last to this quiet house, and to be in the same room with my little Lotty. And you should have heard her when the man rang the bell, and laid me down just by the door-mat, on the carpet in the hall! She gave quite a little scream of joy, and her pretty black eyes shone every bit as brightly as little twinkling stars.

BOXIE (3).

list'en, 'puz'le, per-am'bu-la-tor, pret'ti-ly, par'a-sol, cab'ba-ges,
or'an-ges, cel'er-y.

And what do you think she found inside of me? Would you like to know? Well, listen and count. I am not a very big box, mind. I am a quarter of a yard high, and a quarter of a yard wide, and a quarter of a yard long; just such a box as you would like to have yourself if a man were to ring the bell and bring it in this minute; but I hold a good deal, though, if I'm packed tidily. There was at the very top of me a puzzle, in a box with a sliding lid; that was one thing. There was a tiny tin perambulator, one inch wide, with yellow and scarlet wheels; that was two things. There was a little packet of green peas, that were not green peas after all, but sugar-plums made just the size and just the colour, so that everybody laughed and thought they were real; they were three things. Then there was a penknife—four—with two blades, such a nice one! A white magnet swan to swim—five. A gilt-edged story-book—six. Two pair of white knitted wool socks—seven, eight; they count two, you know. A plum-cake—nine. Lotty cut baby a piece of this directly, because he cried 'Take! take!' so prettily, and Lotty knew what he meant, though he can't speak quite plainly. Five rosy-cheeked apples—that makes fourteen. A doll—fifteen. A little green bath to wash her in—sixteen. A pair of pink kid shoes for her, a hat, a little blue silk parasol, and a lot of clothes, all in *such* a little tiny trunk—seventeen. And all the odd holes and corners were filled up with beautiful, pointed, streaked sea-shells, slipped in one here,

one there, three or four in this place, three or four more in that, just where Lotty's aunt could drop them.

Now, am I not a pleasant little box? Lotty thought so, and Lotty did something with me all day. She shut my lid down first, and made a table of me, and slid the tiny tin perambulator up and down me till one of the wheels broke off, and she spread the puzzle on me, and laid all the shells out like a little shop. And first she called the shells legs of mutton, and rounds of beef, and said she was a butcher; and then she called them cabbages, and oranges, and mint, and celery, and said she was a green-grocer; and then she said they were loaves, and muffins, and buns, and cheese-cakes, and that she was fat Mr Cook the baker, and getting ready to send her men out with the bread. And when she was tired of this, she said she could make a doll's house of me, if she could turn me on my side, so that my lid could open like a little door; and she did. She put the green bath in one corner of me, as though I was a bedroom; and she brought all her other doll's toys, and set me out nicely. And then she took all the toys out, and put me on the ground, and she made me into a seat, and sat on me, and clapped her hands and feet, and laughed, and said that was the best of all.

'Oh, mamma!' she cried, when her mother came into the room, 'may I have Boxie for a seat always? It is so nice—just as tall as I like!'

And her mamma said yes; and her mamma said she would cover me to make me look neat; and she did, the very same day. So now you know the reason why you see me with this red cloth on, and these bright brass nails, and why you thought at first I was a stool.



A SWINGING SONG.

1.

Merry it is on a summer's day,
All through the meadows to wend away;
To watch the brooks glide fast or slow,
And the little fish twinkle down below;
To hear the lark in the blue sky sing,
Oh, sure enough, 'tis a merry thing—
But 'tis merrier far to swing—to swing!

2.

Merry it is on a winter's night,
To listen to tales of elf and sprite,
Of caves and castles so dim and old—
The dismalest tales that ever were told;
And then to laugh, and then to sing,
You may take my word is a merry thing;
But 'tis merrier far to swing—to swing!

3.

Down with the hoop upon the green ;
Down with the ringing tambourine ;
Little heed we for this or for that ;
Off with the bonnet, off with the hat !
Away we go like birds on the wing !
Higher yet ! higher yet ! ' Now for the King !'
This is the way we swing—we swing !

4.

Scarcely the bough bends, Claude is so light—
Mount up behind him—there, that is right !
Down bends the branch now ! swing him away ;
Higher yet—higher yet—higher, I say !
O what a joy it is ! Now let us sing :
' A pear for the Queen—an apple for the King !'
And shake the old tree as we swing—we swing !

MERRY ARE THE BELLS.

1.

Merry are the bells, and merry would they ring,
Merry was myself, and merry could I sing ;
With a merry ding-dong, happy, gay, and free,
And a merry sing-song, happy let us be !

2.

Merry have we met, and merry have we been,
Merry let us part, and merry meet again ;
With our merry sing-song, happy, gay, and free,
And a merry ding-dong, happy let us be !

THE SENSES.

in'stru-ment, del'i-cate, pro-tect'ed, part'i-cle, re-flec'tion,
har'mon-y, dis-cord'ant, dis-tin'guish, ex-pe'ri-ence, av'en-ue,
ig'nor-ance.

Mankind have five senses, which are of great use to them, and without which they could not know anything of the world about them. These senses are *seeing*, *hearing*, *smelling*, *tasting*, and *feeling* or *touch*. We use these senses by means of organs. The word *organ* signifies tool or instrument. The organs of seeing or sight are the eyes, which are also sometimes called the organs of vision.

The *eye* is a very beautiful clear object, round like a ball, and is set in the head in such a way that we can move it about in its place, so as to look on different sides of us. The eye can see only when there is light. At night, when there is very little light from the moon and stars, it is difficult for the eye to see anything; and if there be total darkness, we cannot see at all. The eye is very delicate, and is easily injured; but a thin covering hangs over it called the *eyelid*, which is pulled over the eye when we fear that it will be hurt; and this eyelid is always closed when we go to sleep. The eye is also protected by some little hairs which grow out from the edge of the eyelid, and are called the *eyelashes*. These eyelashes keep small particles of dust and flies from going into the eye, and likewise form a shade to keep off the too powerful glare of the sun.

A small part in the centre of the eye is clear, like a looking-glass, and all the objects we see are reflected on it. This reflection of objects is like a little picture in the eye, and the picture is carried by a nerve to the brain, which gives us the idea of seeing.

The organs of the sense of hearing are the *ears*. The sounds that are made enter the opening of the ears, and strike against a membrane which is spread like a drum inside, and from that the mind has the idea of hearing. Some sounds are pleasant to hear, and others are unpleasant. Sounds which are pleasingly arranged are said to be in *harmony* with each other; and those which are displeasing are called *discordant*.

The *nose* is the organ of the sense of smelling. Fine nerves are spread over the inside of the nostrils, and these are able to smell any odour which is in the air, or which comes from any object having a scent.

The organ of the sense of tasting is the *tongue*, which is also covered with fine nerves, and these in a moment distinguish or know the taste of anything put into the mouth.

The hand is the chief organ of touch or feeling; but the sense of feeling extends all over our body. The ends of the fingers have very fine nerves for feeling. The sense of touch is of great service in assisting or helping the sense of sight. Little children learn the shape of many things by both seeing and handling them. In this way, by the senses acting together, we in time learn to know the shapes or figures of things, and to distinguish one object from another.

By exercising or making use of all our senses, and remembering to the best of our ability what we see and what we hear, we gain *experience*, and are better able to take care of ourselves. Thus the senses are of very great use to us. They are like roads or avenues, by which knowledge reaches the mind; and without them, we should be in a state of total ignorance.

THE OLD GATE (1).

Lubeck, Ger'man-y, hand'some, struc'ture, Maurice, no'ticed,
peo'ple, ob'ject, jew'els, dia'monds, ru'bies, hon'est.

In the town of Lubeck, in Germany, there is a hand-some structure called 'The Old Gate.'

Near this gate there was a little old house, where a boy, whose name was Maurice, lived with his widowed mother. They were quite poor. Maurice had to work all day in a stable for small pay. He and his mother could hardly earn enough to buy food. But Maurice was one of those boys who keep their eyes open. He noticed things, and gave his thoughts to what he noticed. He loved to study even the clouds and the stars.

Early one morning, as he passed through the arch of the old gate, he saw that one of the stones in the wall was marked with red chalk. It was simply marked with a cross; but Maurice looked closer, and saw that the mortar with which the stone was pointed was quite fresh.

'What is the meaning of this?' thought he. 'Why should that stone have been taken out, and then put back, and marked?'

He used his knife, and found that the mortar was quite soft. 'This mortar,' thought he, 'must have been put on less than an hour ago. Why should people come here before light to fix that stone in?' He did not know what to make of it.

'That stone has not been moved without an object,' thought he. The stone was so loose that it could be easily taken out.

Maurice took it out. 'I can replace it,' thought he; 'so no harm will be done.' Behind the stone he found a hollow place; and in that hollow he found a small box, or casket. He opened the box, and the sight of sparkling jewels, of diamonds and rubies, almost took away his breath.

Now, though Maurice was poor, he was honest. It never once crossed his mind to take the jewels for himself. 'They have been stolen by some one, and hidden there for safe keeping,' thought he.

I will tell you how Maurice acted.

THE OLD GATE (2).

po-lice', im-portant, Mul-ler, jew-el-ler, di-rect'ed, at-ten'tion, loos'en-ed, ser-vice, wor-thy, at-ten'tive, sit-u-a-tion.

Maurice put the box of jewels in his pocket, and then placed the stone back as it was before, and pointed it with the mortar he had saved. He then walked away to the house of the chief of the police, and knocked at the door. It was so early that nobody in the house was up. But after Maurice had knocked for some time, the chief put his head out of the window, and said: 'What is the matter, my little fellow?'

'I want to see you at once, Mr Muller,' said Maurice.

'Is it something important?' asked Mr Muller.

'Yes, it is something very important,' said Maurice.

The chief dressed himself, and came down. 'Now, what is it?' said he. 'Has your master had a horse stolen?'

'It is not about the theft of a horse that I have come,' said Maurice. 'Tell me if there have been any jewels stolen lately.'

'Hush!' said the chief. 'We have been making secret search for two days for some very costly jewels that were stolen from the shop of Grimm, the jeweller. How did you hear about them?'

'I have heard nothing! but I have seen something,' said Maurice. 'Come with me, Mr Muller, and I will shew you what I have found.'

Maurice led him to the old gate, and there directed his attention to the stone which he had found loose.

'There, Mr Muller,' said he, 'you see that stone?'

'Yes; what of it?'

'Don't you see anything odd about it?'

'I can't say I do.'

Maurice then shewed him that the stone was marked with red chalk, and that the mortar was fresh. He then loosened the stone, and shewed the hollow place behind it.

'Well, what of it?' said the chief.

'In that hollow,' said Maurice, 'I found this box of jewels, which I think must be those which you tell me have been stolen.'

'They are the same!' cried Mr Muller. 'My good boy, you have done us a great service—a very great service. Come with me at once to Mr Grimm's house.'

They went to Mr Grimm's; and that worthy jeweller was so much pleased with the boy's conduct, that he took him under his care.

A boy so honest and attentive did not find it hard to get a good situation, and he and his mother were soon above want.



THE WOOD-MOUSE.

in'no-cent, cal'en-dar, night'in-gales, Ob'e-ron.

1.

Do you know the little Wood-mouse,
That pretty little thing,
That sits among the forest leaves,
Beside the forest spring?

2.

Its fur is red as the red chestnut,
And it is small and slim ;
It leads a life most innocent
Within the forest dim.

3.

'Tis a timid, gentle creature,
And seldom comes in sight ;
It has a long and wiry tail,
And eyes both black and bright.

4.

It makes its nest of soft, dry moss,
In a hole so deep and strong ;
And there it sleeps secure and warm,
The dreary winter long.

5.

And though it keeps no calendar,
It knows when flowers are springing ;
And waketh to its summer life,
When nightingales are singing.

6.

Upon the boughs the squirrel sits,
The wood-mouse plays below ;
And plenty of food it finds itself
Where the beech and chestnut grow.

7.

In the hedge-sparrow's nest he sits,
When its summer brood is fled,
And picks the berries from the bough
Of the hawthorn overhead.

8.

I saw a little wood-mouse once,
Like Oberon in his hall,
With the green, green moss beneath his feet,
Sit under a mushroom tall.

9.

I saw him sit and his dinner eat,
All under the forest tree ;
His dinner of chestnut ripe and red,
And he ate it heartily.

10.

I wish you could have seen him there ;
It did my spirit good,
To see the small thing God had made
Thus eating in the wood.

MASTER SQUEAK (1).

squeak, chil'dren, shoul'der, laughed, screamed, se'ri-ous-ly, trou'ble-some, heav'i-ly, stopped.

Children, I want to tell you a story. It is all about a little fairy-man, who came and hopped on to my shoulder, dangling one tiny leg on one side of me, and one on the other, and who then began blowing in my ear.

'Squeak! squeak! squeak!' he went, so sharply. And then—just as you do—I burst out laughing.

Well, when I laughed, I shook so, the fairy-man had to hold on tight by my hair, or he would have fallen off. He was a hard-working little fellow, though; and, as soon as I was straight enough, he began doing what he was sent to do again.

'Squeak! sque-ee-eak! sque-ee-ee-eaker!' he went, twice as loud as before. And this time I didn't laugh—as you do—but I gave a loud cry.

'Don't!' I screamed out. 'Don't! You'll crack the drum of my ear! And what do you want with me at all?'

With which I put my hands up to catch hold of the little fellow, and to set him before me on the table, and look seriously in his face. But when I touched my right shoulder—where he was—he was gone! He had hopped on to the left. And when I touched the left shoulder, he was gone again. He had hopped on to the right.

'Oh, very well, Mr Fairy-man!' I cried. 'You are going to play games, are you? Very well; I'll play with you. I daresay I shall beat you, if I try long enough. Come on.'

And I began; and he began. It was so droll. I went to the right and the left, to the right and the left, to the

right and the left, just as I felt the little tiresome Mr Fairy-man hopping; and though sometimes I caught hold just of his heel, and sometimes of the tip of the tail of his little wee coat, he always slipped away, and gave a loud 'squeak,' because he was so glad. O dear! I grew so tired. I was quite out of breath. But I went on. I knew a song about 'Try again, try again, keep on trying;' and I thought I would do what the song told me. But, O dear! Mr Fairy-man was *so* troublesome. I do think he would have made an owl open her eyes in sunshine, if he had hopped into her ivy-bush, and had made up his mind to it. But at last he couldn't hop nearly so quickly. His tiny feet came down heavily upon me, and sprung up heavily. And then they stopped a little; and then they stopped a little longer; and then, before he could get off, I had him tight and safe in my hand, so that there was no hopping for him any more.

MASTER SQUEAK (2).

fin'gers, mous-tache', pret'ti-est, i'vor-y, min'ute, an'gry, gra'cious,
un-der-stand', sau'cy, en'gine, com-pre-hend', lan'guage.

'Now, sir,' I said, looking at him, 'let me see what you are like.' And I did see; and I will tell you. He was about as tall as your two hands, if you stand them one on the top of the other, on the little fingers, with the thumb up. He was thin. He had little red curls, and little red whiskers, and a little red moustache. His eyes were brown. His teeth were the prettiest little teeth I ever saw. Such dear little mites of ivory, in such dear little even rows! And his wee white hands were even more pretty still. I thought of the new baby when I looked at them, and I kissed them. I couldn't

help it. They had such dear little nails, just as baby's have, and they had such dear little clever joints. But I tried to look cross the next minute, because I wanted Mr Fairy-man to think I was very angry indeed.

'Now, sir,' I said, speaking as sharply as I could, 'why have you come in this way squeaking?'

You should have seen Master Squeak then. He turned himself right over his head; he jumped on to tip-toe of one foot, and he struck the other broad out, with his arms stretched as wide as they would go. And he looked straight into my eyes, and gave me a saucy laugh.

'Good gracious!' I cried, so cross, I forgot I ought to be polite. 'I suppose you don't understand English? Ought I to speak French?'

'No, no, no!' he cried; and 'Non, non, non!' in French; and 'Nein, nein, nein!' in German; and 'Na, na, na!' in Welsh. 'I speak to the heart; and all hearts beat alike, and whatever I say, you will be sure to hear.'

'I know *that*!' I screamed; 'I can hear *you*!' And I put my hands to my ears, for wasn't his 'squeak!' sounding in them still? 'But,' I said, 'I want to be sure that you can hear *me*!'

'Oh,' he cried, standing on one leg again, and looking into my eyes with his saucy laugh; 'oh!'

'O dear! O dear!' I cried, very much vexed. 'How goosy-ganderish you are! *Will* you tell me whether, when I speak, you can understand what I say?'

'Yes, yes, yes,' he nodded, as fast as the up-and-down of a steam-engine.

I thought he was never going to leave off nodding.

'Um!' I said, when he *had* finished. 'You are tired now, are you?'

'Yes, yes, yes,' he went again, as fast as before.

'Oh, you hissing little copper-kettle!' I cried out; 'I wish you knew how to behave. Why don't you answer a question when it is put to you?'

'Ask me again,' he said, 'politely; you were cross before. Speak gently, and I will tell you.'

Well, to be sure!

But I knew he was right, and that I had been cross; and so I began once more. 'Can you comprehend my language?' I said, using a long word, to be very grand.

'I do comprehend your language,' said Master Squeak. 'I know all you are going to say before you open your mouth.'

'Oh, indeed,' I cried, quite cross again. 'Then I shan't trouble myself to open it any more. What is the use?'

MASTER SQUEAK (3).

re-cov'er, oc'cu-py, knick'er-bock'er, car'ra-way, bis'cuit,
con-sid'er-a-bly, spec'ta-cles, shad'ow.

The Fairy-man shut his little eyes, and sat himself flat down on the table. 'You are rude again,' he said. 'Until you recover, I shall not tell you anything more. I shall occupy myself by eating my lunch.' And he took out of his knickerbocker pocket a wee tiny fairy bag of cakes, and began to nibble them. The bag was an inch square; you could have laid it on the palm of your hand. The little cakes were just the size of silver three-penny pieces, and in the middle of each there lay one carraway-seed—there was no room for more—just to make it nice. I could read the baker's name on the bag, although it was so small. The letters said, B. HONEY, MILK PLACE, ALL LANDS; and I wished I knew where the shop was, that I might go there.

‘Well,’ said Master Squeak, taking out another biscuit (he had eaten four whilst I had been looking and reading) — ‘well? Are you better?’

‘Yes,’ I said softly; ‘and I will try and not be rude any more.’

‘Bravo! bravo! bravo!’ he cried, popping the biscuit-bag away, and standing once more on his little tip-toe; ‘Bravo! bravo! *bra-vis-simo!*’

I was just going to speak sharply again, but I am not happy when I am cross (are you?), and so I held my tongue. ‘If you please,’ I said, when we had both been quiet a minute, ‘what were you going to say?’

‘Good! good! good!’ he cried. ‘Very good! very good! Very much improved!’

‘I know,’ I went on softly, ‘that you have come to see me for something. Will you please to tell me what it is?’

‘Better! better! better!’ he cried. ‘Con-sid-erably better; in fact, quite good!’

‘And I am sure,’ I said, ‘you wouldn’t—you wouldn’t—wouldn’t *squeak* at me, if you hadn’t been told. Will you please to tell me what it means?’

‘Yes,’ he said; ‘yes, and yes, and yes. You must love everybody; you must be very kind; and everybody will love *you*.’

And then he hopped from the table to my shoulder, cried ‘Squeak! squeak! squeak!’ three times quickly in my ear, and hopped clean and clear away.

I looked high and low for him; over and under; in and out. I even put on my spectacles, so as to be quite sure about the corners; but I never saw him, or the shadow of him, any more. And I don’t think, if even you, with your bright eyes, were to look, that you would find him. You would have to give it up.

THE FAIRIES.

1.

Up the airy mountain,
Down the rushy glen,
We daren't go a-hunting
For fear of little men ;
Wee folk, good folk,
Trooping all together ;
Green jacket, red cap,
And white owl's feather !

2.

Down along the rocky shore
Some make their home,
They live on crispy pancakes
Of yellow tide-foam ;
Some in the reeds
Of the black mountain lake,
With frogs for their watch-dogs,
All night awake.

3.

High on the hill-top
The old king sits ;
He is now so old and gray
He 's nigh lost his wits.

4.

They stole little Bridget
For seven years long ;
When she came down again,
Her friends were all gone.

They took her lightly back,
Between the night and morrow,
They thought that she was fast asleep,
But she was dead with sorrow.
They have kept her ever since
Deep within the lakes,
On a bed of flag leaves,
Watching till she wakes.

5.

By the craggy hill-side,
Through the mosses bare,
They have planted thorn-trees
For pleasure here and there.
Is any man so daring
As dig one up in spite,
He shall find the thornies set
In his bed at night.

6.

Up the airy mountain,
Down the rushy glen,
We daren't go a-hunting
For fear of little men ;
Wee folk, good folk,
Trooping all together ;
Green jacket, red cap,
And white owl's feather !



ON ANIMALS (1).

crea'ture, an'i-mal, differ-ent, un-der-stand', differ-ence, var-i'e-ty, fac'ul-ty, in'stinct, nec'es-sar-y, progress, leop'ard, quad'ru-ped, do-mes'tic, worst'ed, val'u-a-ble, bi'ped.

Every creature that is alive, and can feel, and move about, is called an *animal*. A cow, a fish, a bird, and a bee are all animals, though they are very different creatures. They differ in size, in shape, in colour, and in many other ways, yet in some things they are alike. They are all of them alive; they all feel, and can move about from one place to another whenever they please. But a tree is not an animal, for it is fixed in the ground, and can move only if something else moves it.

Men and women and boys and girls are animals. Perhaps you can tell why. Man is, however, far above all other animals, because God has given him a soul that can think and understand, and know the difference between right and wrong. Then men can talk, which the other animals cannot do, and they can teach their children what they know themselves. But the young of other animals learn nothing from their fathers and mothers, and know no more when they are old than they did when they were young. Yet the bird knows how to build its nest, and different kinds of birds make a great variety of nests; the bee knows how to build its cells, and to make honey; and the spider knows how to spin a cobweb to catch flies. For God has given to the lower animals a faculty called *instinct*, by which they know at once whatever it is necessary that they should know, in order to be able to take care of themselves and their young ones. But they never make any further progress.

A great many animals have four legs. You can tell the names of those you have seen. But there are other animals in far-off countries, which roam through the forests or live in dens and caverns, such as lions and tigers, wolves and bears, and leopards. These are called *beasts of prey*, because they live by chasing and killing other animals. All those animals that have four legs are called *quadrupeds*. Some quadrupeds have feet of a single hoof, like the horse; others have feet with the hoof cloven into two, like the cow, the sheep, the pig, and the goat; and others have feet with toes and claws, like the dog, the cat, the lion, the tiger, and the bear.

Many quadrupeds are very useful to man, who keeps them near his home. These are called *domestic animals*. Thus, the sheep provides us with both food and clothing. Its flesh is called *mutton*; its skin is made into leather for shoes; its wool is woven into cloth for coats, and flannel for blankets, and worsted for stockings. The cow gives us milk, of which butter and cheese are made. The flesh of cows and oxen is called *beef*. Their skin is made into leather, and their horns into combs and other articles. In some parts of the country oxen are employed in the field, instead of horses, to draw the plough. Horses are valuable animals, for they are useful both for riding on, and in drawing carriages.

Some animals have only two legs, and are called *bipeds*. Men, women, and children are bipeds, and birds are bipeds. Birds, as you know, have wings with which they can fly in the air, and go very great distances without being tired. Ducks, geese, and swans are birds which love to swim in water, and they have two web-feet, with which they push themselves along in swimming.

ON ANIMALS (2).

rep'tiles, in'sects, weath'er, trou'ble-some, ser'vi-ces, plough'men,
man-u-fac'tur-er, mead'ow, soft'ened, mul'ti-tudes, con-tin'u-al-ly,
cat'er-pil-lar, co-coon'.

There is another class of animals called *reptiles*, but we do not see many of them in this country. Reptiles, such as snakes and serpents, have clear shining skins, like fishes, and they crawl with their bodies on the ground. Some reptiles, such as the frog and the toad, have feet, with which they can walk or leap forward.

Insects are another class of animals, of which there are great numbers in this and other countries. Flies, gnats, bees, and butterflies are insects, which we see flying about in the fine summer weather, and sometimes they are very troublesome to us. Still, they are very useful, because they are food for birds and fishes, and do other good services in creation.

Worms have no legs at all. Some boys and girls despise worms, and tread upon these little crawling creatures. But worms and insects have their own work to do, which is of very great service too. Some of them are ploughmen! and others are manufacturers! Great numbers of earth-worms live underground in the meadows. They feed on earth, but what they like best is dead leaves, which they cannot find underground, so, after the rain has softened the ground, they contrive to make their way up to the surface in search of leaves. Then they empty their little bodies on the grass in the shape of worm-casts, and carry back dead leaves. Now these worm-casts are just what the grass wants to make it grow—nice soft earth, in which the

roots and seeds can easily make their way. Multitudes of these tiny worms are continually stirring and loosening the soil, as they make their way to the top. Then the moles chase them to feed on them, and so stir and loosen the soil still more. The finest old meadows owe their high value to the worm-casts, which, in course of years, the many multitudes of earth-worms have laid on the soil.

You have all heard of the silkworm. It is so called because it spins silk. This little creature is a green caterpillar, with a great number of legs. It feeds on the leaves of the mulberry-tree, and when it is full-grown, it leaves off eating, and begins to spin from its own body fine soft threads of silk, which it winds round and round its body, until it has made for itself a case or ball of silk, inside of which it goes to sleep for a time, and by-and-by it makes a hole through the case, and comes out in the shape of a small butterfly. This case or ball is called a *cocoon*, and it is from the cocoons spun by silkworms that all our silk is made.

Fishes are animals that live altogether in water. The greater number have skins with smooth shining scales, and they have fins with which they keep themselves up in the water. Fishes can also swim very fast, and dart through the water after the prey on which they feed. Some fishes are very large, much larger than a man; but others are small, such as herrings and minnows; and they swim in great numbers in the sea and in rivers.

There are some animals that live in the sea, that have neither legs, nor wings, nor fins, but have a hard covering or shell, such as the oyster, the lobster, and the mussel. These are called *shell-fish*.



Wren and Nest.

BIRDS' NESTS.

1.

The skylark's nest among the grass,
And waving corn is found ;
The robin's on a shady bank,
With oak-leaves strewed around.

2.

The wren builds in an ivied thorn,
Or old and ruined wall ;
The mossy nest so covered in,
You scarce can see at all.

3.

The martins build their nests of clay,
In rows beneath the eaves ;
The silvery lichens, moss, and hair,
The chaffinch interweaves.

4.

The cuckoo makes no nest at all,
But through the wood she strays,

Until she finds one snug and warm,
And there her egg she lays.

5.

The sparrow has a nest of hay,
With feathers warmly lined ;
The ringdove's careless nest of sticks,
On lofty trees we find.

6.

Rooks build together in a wood,
And often disagree ;
The owl will build inside a barn,
Or in a hollow tree.

7.

The blackbird's nest of grass and mud
In bush and bank is found ;
The lapwing's darkly spotted eggs
Are laid upon the ground.

8.

The magpie's nest is made with thorns
In leafless tree or hedge ;
The wild-duck and the water-hen
Build by the water's edge.

9.

Birds build their nests from year to year,
According to their kind ;
Some very neat and beautiful—
Some simpler ones we find.

10.

The habits of each little bird,
And all its patient skill,
Are surely taught by God himself,
And ordered by His will.



THE ROBIN'S STORY (1).

bur'ied, Chris-ti'na, daugh'ter, res'cued, al-to-geth'er, won'd'er-ing,
dis-ap-pear', dis-ap-point'ed, be-gin'ning, for-got'ten, ex-cite'ment,
in-tense'ly.

Oh! how cold it was last winter. I think I should have been frozen to death, and buried in the deep white snow, if it had not been for little Christina. The bleak north wind blew, and the white flakes came down very thick and fast, and I tried hard to keep myself warm by hopping about. But it was of no use, and at last I fell down, feeling very ill and very tired. I think I must have fainted, because the next thing I remember after my fall was finding myself inside a warm cottage. Kind little Christina, the old basketmaker's daughter, had taken pity upon poor Robin, and rescued him from a snow grave.

I must tell you about this little Christina, for she was such a dear good child, and so kind to me. When she

saw that I was better, and could once more hop about, her brown eyes looked brighter than I had ever seen them before. For you must know, I had often watched her running in the forest before the hard winter came. And when she said : ' Poor little Robin must stay with Christina until the cold wind goes away, and the bright sun comes out again,' I loved her more than ever.

I thanked her in the best way I could, by singing a few notes which made her laugh a funny little laugh, and then she began to be very busy. She put more logs upon the fire, and made it blaze up merrily ; she took a broom and swept up all the bits of wood that had fallen out too far, and, when that was done, drew the table from a corner of the room and made ready for tea. Then, taking the black kettle from its place, little Christina vanished altogether. I was wondering in my own mind where she had gone to, when she appeared again with the kettle, now full of water, and put it on the bright fire to boil.

Oh ! she was a clever little girl, and a very tidy one too, for, when all her work was done, she put on a clean print apron, after washing her brown hands. Do you wonder what made her hands and face brown ? It was with running about in the hot sun in summer, and not minding the cold wind in winter.

As the evening began to close in, and the light to disappear outside, Christina went out to the door ; I think she expected some one who did not come, for she came back looking quite disappointed.

' Grandfather is late this evening,' she said, as she stood by the fire and watched the kettle beginning to boil. ' There is not much coffee left,' added the little girl, ' but he will be so tired, I will just make him some.' And so

she did, as soon as the water boiled. Then she turned round to look for me. I think she must have forgotten that I was there until then, for she said : ' Ah, Robin, so you have been in the window all this time, and I have never given you anything to eat ; ' so she broke some brown bread and gave me the crumbs. I was picking at them when the door opened, and her grandfather came in. He had a bundle of sticks on his back, and some fir branches in his hand. Christina ran to him directly, wanting to know what had made him so late.

' I have been to the village, little one, ' he said, throwing his sticks into a corner. ' Everything ready as usual. What ! you have got coffee ? ' he added, as she poured out the contents of the little pot.

' Yes, grandfather, I thought you would be tired. '

' So I am, child, so I am. Aha ! what is this ? '

He looked at me, and I thought I was called upon to say something. I chirped a few notes to tell him how I had come into his cottage. But I do not think he understood very well, because Christina told him it all over again. He was willing to let me stay, and, after he had taken his coffee, he put up a large branch for me to roost on.

While Christina cleared away the things, he sat down by the fire to make baskets, and, after a little, she came and helped him by handing him the twigs. And as they worked, he told all he had seen at the village, where he had been to sell some baskets. Christina was glad to hear all he had to tell, but she soon got tired and sleepy. I was very glad to see them both getting ready to go to bed, as I felt very tired myself, though the excitement of watching all that was going on had kept me from going to sleep.

They raked the fire together, and put a log on it to keep it in and make the cottage warm through the night, as the winter in the Black Forest is intensely cold. Then the old man said a hymn and a prayer, and Christina went to bed in her own tiny room, and her grandfather lay down on the pallet in a corner of the cottage.

THE ROBIN'S STORY (2).

cup'board, break'fast, peas'ant, con-tent'ed, bus'y, earn'ing,
pin'ing, cot'tage.

In the morning, as soon as it was light, old Hans made the fire, which had kept in only half the night, and when it began to blaze he put the kettle on to boil. Christina soon came in and brought out of the cupboard the brown bread and weak beer which was to be for their breakfast.

You know she and her grandfather were German peasants, and it is very, very seldom that the people who live near the great Black Forest can afford to have coffee for breakfast or supper. Christina did not forget me, for when she had finished her own meal, she broke some bread into crumbs, and filled a little cup with water for me.

Oh, kind little Christina, to think of poor Robin. Every day was the same in that cottage, and yet those two always seemed so happy and contented. I think the reason was that they were always busy, and Christina used to go about singing to herself, as she washed up the things or swept the dust from the floor. One song I can remember from hearing it so often :

Cold the winter wind is blowing,
And it never ceases snowing,
Snowing, blowing, all day long,
Yet I sing a merry song.

I like to see the bright fire burning,
I like to know my bread I'm earning,
I like to work and then to play ;
I'm happy, happy, all the day.

Soon will come the spring's soft showers,
And after that the summer flowers ;
This makes me happy all day long,
This makes me sing a merry song.

And, as the winter passed away, I began to long for the spring that Christina sang about. I was very fond of my little friend, but I was only a robin redbreast, and wanted to get out to see what was going on in the forest. It was with a joyful heart, then, that I saw the snow going away and the days getting longer. Christina was glad too, and so was old Hans.

One day the bright sun came out from the clouds, and then I sang my sweetest song as a farewell to dear Christina. She knew I was pining for the fresh air, so she opened the tiny window of the cottage, and said : ' Good-bye, dear little Robin, and don't forget Christina, but come again next winter.' I sang again to thank her, and then flew away to visit some friends of the robin redbreast tribe. But I often come back to where my dear little friend lives with old Hans, just to see her again, and find out whether every one is as kind to her as she was to me last winter.



THE DORMOUSE.

1.

The little Dormouse is tawny red ;
He makes against winter a nice snug bed,
He makes his bed in a mossy bank,
Where the plants in the summer grow tall and rank.

2.

Away from the daylight, far under ground,
His sleep through the winter is quiet and sound.
And when all above him it freezes and snows,
What is it to him, for he nought of it knows ?
And till the cold time of the winter is gone,
The little Dormouse keeps sleeping on.

3.

But at last, in the fresh breezy days of the spring,
When the green leaves bud, and the merry birds sing,

And the dread of the winter is over and past,
The little Dormouse peeps out at last.

4.

Out of his snug quiet burrow he wends,
And looks all about for his neighbours and friends ;
Then he says, as he sits at the foot of a larch :
'Tis a beautiful day, for the first day of March !
The violet is blowing, the blue sky is clear ;
The lark is upspringing, his carol I hear ;
And in the green fields are the lamb and the foal ;
I am glad I'm not sleeping now down in my hole !

5.

Then away he runs, in his merry mood,
Over the fields and into the wood,
To find any grain there may chance to be,
Or any small berry that hangs on the tree.

6.

So, from early morning, till late at night,
Has the poor little creature its own delight,
Looking down to the earth and up to the sky,
Thinking, 'Oh, what a happy Dormouse am I !'



ON VEGETABLES.

veg'e-ta-bles, re-move', re-mark'a-ble, differ-ence, nour'ish-ment, on'ions, in'ju-ry, car'pen-ter, ex-am'ple, cab'bage, let'tuce.

All things that grow in the earth are called *vegetables* or *plants*. Vegetables are said to be *alive* when they are growing, and *dead* when they wither and cease to grow. Vegetables cannot remove from one place to another like animals. They must remain in the place where they are growing. But there is another remarkable difference between vegetables and animals—vegetables cannot feel.

A plant grows from a *seed* which is sown in the ground. In spring, when the weather becomes warm, the heat causes the seed to swell out till it bursts its skin or covering, and then two little shoots push out from the seed. One of these grows down into the ground, and is called the *root*, and the other grows upwards, and rises above the ground. It is called the *stem*. By and by leaves grow on the stem, and at last, on the top of the plant there comes out a flower.

A great many little roots grow out from the root underground. Each of them has a little mouth through which it sucks up nourishment. By means of these roots, vegetables draw up water mixed with other substances in the ground, and this sap rises up to the stem, and then through all the branches. Unless, however, they had the heat of the sun, vegetables could not grow. When the bleak cold days of winter come, the sap goes down again into the earth, the leaves wither and die, and the plants are bare until the warmth of spring revives them, and causes them to push forth new buds and leaves.

The roots of plants are not only useful to the plants, but they are also very useful to man. Many of them are eaten, as turnips, carrots, and onions.

The stems of many plants are very valuable to us. Thus, the stems of corn, which, after the corn has been thrashed out, are called straw, serve as litter for horses in the stable, and are used to make beds for the cows to lie down upon. In some warm countries, the stem of a plant called the sugar-cane provides us with sugar. The stem of the flax plant consists of a number of threads, which are woven into linen, of which shirts and sheets and towels are made. The stem of hemp, which is a plant of the same kind as flax, is made into canvas for sails for ships, and for tents and ropes.

Trees are large vegetables. Their stems, called trunks, are made of wood, and are covered with a bark or skin, which protects them from injury, and assists them in their growth. The wood of trees is sawn into long deals and beams, and is made by carpenters into chairs, tables, floors of houses, doors, carts, and many other things.

The leaves of plants form food for sheep and cattle. Grass, for example, consists chiefly of leaves. Leaves are eaten by men too, as the leaves of the cabbage, lettuce, &c. The tea that we drink is made by soaking the leaves of the tea-plant in boiling water.

The blossoms or flowers of plants protect the seed, and when the blossom withers and falls off, the seed remains in the fruit. The seeds of plants, from which young plants grow, are of great use to animals. Birds feed on them. The seeds of corn are made into bread; and we eat peas and beans, and the seeds of a great many other plants.

So you see that every part of a plant is useful, not only to the plant itself, but to animals as well.

A CHILD'S WISH IN JUNE

prith'ee, lan'guid-ly, rog'uish-ly, neigh'bour-ing, grass-hop'per.

1.

Mother, mother ! the winds are at play ;
Prithee, let me be idle to-day.
Look, dear mother ! the flowers all lie
Languidly under the bright blue sky ;
See how slowly the streamlet glides ;
Look how the violet roguishly hides ;
Even the butterfly rests on the rose,
And scarcely sips the sweets as he goes.

2.

Poor Tray is asleep in the noonday sun,
And the flies go about him one by one ;
And pussy sits near with a sleepy grace,
Without ever thinking of washing her face.
There flies a bird to a neighbouring tree,
But very lazily flieth he ;
And he sits and twitters a gentle note,
That scarcely ruffles his little throat.

3.

You bid me be busy ; but, mother ! hear
How the humdrum grasshopper soundeth near ;
And the soft west wind is so light in its play,
It scarcely moves a leaf on the spray.
I wish, oh, I wish I was yonder cloud,
That sails about in its misty shroud ;
Books and work I no more should see,
And I'd come and float, dear mother ! o'er thee.

YOUNG BUFF-TAIL (1).

wriggle, fam'i-ly, Mid'dle-sex, re-la'tions, It'a-ly, Ger'man-y,
par'li-a-ment, po-lice'men, e-las'tic, en've-lopes, hos'pi-tal,
plen'ti-ful, gen'tle-men, cat'er-pil-lar.

Bah! Ts! Go! Take care, little foot, what you are treading on! Move one step back, if you please, off from the gravel on to the grass, and let me glide and wriggle just where I fancy.

Ho! ho! You are laughing, are you? You thought I said giggle, and you must go and giggle directly! I did *not* say giggle; I said wriggle. And I meant it; and so I tell you. Hm! The idea of laughing at me! Do you know who I am? Of course you don't, though. If you did, you would not be so foolish.

I am a very grand person—a very grand person, indeed. There are some of my family in Middlesex, and some in Wiltshire, and some in all the other fifty counties of Wales and England, and, I daresay, some in Ireland and Scotland, and I am sure there are a great many of us in France. No doubt, too, as I am so very grand, you would find plenty of my cousins, and uncles, and nephews, and all other relations, in Italy, and Germany, and Turkey, and, indeed, all over the world; but I will tell you how I am sure that there are plenty like me over there in France.

The parliament of Paris made an edict, or law, about me once. They did, indeed. I thought I should make you stare. And it is ever so many years ago; about a hundred and fifty; and that is so very many years ago, that, at that time, your great-grandfathers and great-grandmothers, who were alive then, had no policemen, and no

pillar-posts, and no gas-lamps, and no elastic sides to their boots, and no envelopes, and no violet ink, and no children's hospital.

There! See what poor things your people were, whilst mine were so grand and plentiful, they were obliged to be talked of in an edict, or law. Ah! There is nothing like being one of a real old family! Nothing—nothing. It makes you feel so grand, and look so grand, and talk so grand, and really *be* so grand, which is ever so much better and more grand than all.

Yes; it is true. An edict, or law. No wonder. I shall be nearly three inches long when I have grown as big as I can grow, and I am covered with such gay stripes of black and yellow. And no wonder. I am such a beautiful buff at my tail! Of course you will like to hear why the polite French gentlemen took so much trouble about us. We were eating up every leaf on every oak-tree that they had. Ha! ha! ha! There we were, great and small, old caterpillars and young caterpillars; whether the oaks budded out fresh green leaves, or whether they had grown more dark and dry, whether it was bright hot sun-time for us to feed in, or whether we had to nibble by the pale light of the silver moon, there we were, and we kept eating, eating, till the French peasants, and their dark-eyed wives, with clean white caps on, did not know what to do. We nibbled and nibbled, and we swarmed and swarmed, till their oak-trees stood brown and bare, and there was nothing left on them but bark and branches.

YOUNG BUFF-TAIL (2).

reg'i-ment, sol'diers, ha'zel, de-li'cious, mar'quis, orch'ard, ti'ni-est,
po-lite', peo'ple, fright'ened, ob-liged', feath'er-y.

Ha! ha! ha! I must laugh at it again, because I think it is so very droll and grand! And we have such a funny way of eating leaves too. I don't suppose you know, as you are so very young and foolish, but leaves are made of two skins, I will call them, grown tight together, with the veins, or food-pipes, running in between. We know this, though you don't. We know it directly we are hatched out of our egg-shells, when we are only just a little scratch long; and we eat only one skin of the leaf, so that we may have the other to crawl on; and there we eat till we have eaten from where the stalk is, down to the very tip.

You should just watch us when we are doing this. We get a great many of us together, and we march in lines, exactly like a regiment of tiny soldiers. Of course we kill the leaves, although we only nibble away one side. The other half very soon parches and withers, and there is the tree, as I said, bitten bare, with nothing on it but brown bark and branches. Well, this is just what my people did to the oak-trees in France—the oak-trees that were standing over there, letting shadows down on the heads of the polite Frenchmen.

But do you suppose that when all the oak-leaves were eaten, they left off eating? Ah! that shews how very foolish you are. My people are not so silly as to sulk, and to find fault when one sort of food they like is all gone, and there is no more of it. They eat something else then, and are very thankful to get it. Sometimes it is beech-leaves, sometimes it is lime-leaves, sometimes it is

hazel-leaves, sometimes it is filbert-leaves (tp, tp, tp! so delicious!), sometimes it is elm-leaves, sometimes it is willow. And what did my people do over in France, but, when the oaks were all gone, get to swarming and nibbling and clustering over all the fruit-trees.

Then it was that the French counts and barons and marquises grew frightened at us, and began to shrug their shoulders, and to talk to each other in French very loudly, and to look very angry and very strong, and to meet in parliament about us, and to make their edict, or law. They said the poor people *must* go into the forests, and the orchards, and the gardens, and along the roads, and in the lanes, and *must* pick the caterpillars off the trees, and kill them, else they would punish them, and be very severe indeed.

The poor people were obliged to do what the parliament said. They did go into the forests and orchards, and all the other places; but—ha! ha! ha!—try their very best and hardest, stretch out their longest, and stoop down their lowest, get up on ladders, or on three-legged stools, shake the trees even, give them great cross blows, they could not take us all away, they could not pick off every one of us, and leave the fresh young leaves to grow again, bright-green and glossy, and with both their skins whole. A tree is rather large, you know, when you think of its tip-top branches and its branches brushing upon the ground, and its arms going right to the right, and its other arms going right out to the left, besides those going out to the back and the front, and all up the middle; and we caterpillars can climb, climb, all over it, much farther than men and boys can, and we are just as safe on the tiniest twig as on the oldest and strongest trunk. So, of course, the

poor French people, although they did pick and kill till they were tired, could not get rid of all of us, and there we were. We did all our fairy magic-work just as if there had been no fingers picking at us, and no pots and baskets standing under the trees for us to fall into dead.

When we were about a week old we cracked our first coat, and came out bigger; when we were a fortnight old, we cracked the second, and came out bigger still; at three weeks, we cracked the third, and were larger again; at four weeks, we wound ourselves up to rest a little till we could crack our skins the last time, and come out beautiful feathery moths to glance and flutter in the sun.

YOUNG BUFF-TAIL (3).

cuck'oo, spar'row, swallow, thou'sand, doz'en, naught'y, bar'on,
quan'ti-ty, dread'ful-ly.

The French people did not know it, but what they wanted all this time were cuckoos and sparrows to eat us up. These are the dreadful creatures that can fly to our highest places and down to our lowest, and can peck at us with their sharp bills, and swallow hundreds of us, without the French counts and barons making any law at all. Why, a dreadful cuckoo will swoop down on to a tree, and think nothing of eating a whole dozen of us just for his lunch. And as for the sparrows, they are so fond of their little sparrows in their nests at home, they will carry away scores and scores of us to drop into their little screeching throats. Three thousand pretty caterpillars a week will one pair of these horrible monsters carry off. Oh dear! it almost makes me crack my coat, although it is not my time yet, to think of it!

Where were the cuckoos and sparrows in France, then, all this while? I don't know. I never heard. Perhaps some naughty little French boy had been climbing up the trees, and stealing all the birds' eggs. Or perhaps some other naughty little boy had been popping at the young dicks with his silly little gun. At anyrate, there were not enough birds to eat us, and, as I said before, there we were. But at last the poor French people were able to leave off picking, the counts and barons took away their law, the trees grew fresh young leaves again, all glossy, and whole, and green. A great quantity, yes, days and days of cold slow rain came, and the rain soaked the trees, and soaked our backs, and made us drop off heavy and stupid, and we lay on the cold wet ground, and got soaked still more, and then we were so cold and wretched we all died. Hey, dear! It was a pity that, after being so grand, we should get so low; but we did, and so I am obliged to tell you.

But—ha! ha! ha!—it is very nice to think I belong to a family that was grand once, isn't it? And this reminds me to say that some people declare these grand caterpillars were not my own direct family after all. The idea! They say they were the brown-tails, or else the golden-tails, and that there was no buff-tail in it. That is just like angry boys and girls, when one is said to be good and true, and the rest don't like it. They cry out: 'It wasn't you, it was me!' (which is bad grammar); and they cry out: 'I'm as good as he is, or as she is, and I ought to have it just as much as him, or her!' (which is dreadfully bad grammar again). And I don't like such sayings. The best way is not to take any notice when people are so cross and rude, but to make out your own mind, and to keep to what it tells you.

HARVEST-FIELD FLOWERS.

mar'i-gold, con-vol'vu-lus, rust'ling.

1.

Come down into the harvest-fields
This autumn morn with me ;
For in the pleasant autumn fields
There's much to hear and see.
On yellow slopes of waving corn
The autumn sun shines clearly ;
And 'tis joy to walk, on days like this,
Among the bearded barley.

2.

Within the sunny harvest-fields
We'll gather flowers enow ;
The poppy red and the marigold,
The bugles brightly blue ;
We'll gather the white convolvulus,
That opes in the morning early ;
With a cluster of nuts, an ear of wheat,
And an ear of the bearded barley.

3.

Bright over the golden fields of corn
Doth shine the autumn sky ;
So let's be merry while we may,
For time goes hurrying by.
They take the sickle from the wall
When morning dews shine pearly ;
And the mower whets the ringing scythe,
To cut the bearded barley.

4.

Come, then, into the harvest-fields ;
The robin sings his song ;
The corn stands yellow on the hills,
And autumn stays not long.
They'll carry the sheaves of corn away,
They reaped to-day so early,
Along the lanes, with a rustling sound,
Their loads of the bearded barley !

WEEDS.

di-rec'tion, pret'ti-est, thyme, mig-no-nette', trow'el, con-tin'ued, self-ish-ness, ex-am'ple, en-cour-age-ment, hap-pi-ness, i'dle-ness, o-ver-spread', tang'led, dif-fi-cult.

'I am ready now, grandfather; we can have a look at them before breakfast.'

George and grandfather went out into the garden.

'What a beautiful morning!' said the boy. 'How fresh everything looks, and how pure and clear the air is!'

Now, things did not look any fresher, and the air was no purer or clearer, than you might find them almost any morning. But then George lived and had been brought up in a large city, where there were tall chimneys pouring out great volumes of thick black smoke, and where the houses were crowded together in rows upon rows, and narrow dirty streets ran in all directions.

George had been several times to see his grandfather in the quiet country village, and had always looked forward with pleasure to the time when he could get away for a few days from the city, with its noise, and smoke, and dust, to the lanes, and hedgerows, and waving corn, and bright green grass of the country.

On this occasion it was dark before he arrived at the cottage, and he and grandfather had agreed to rise next morning early, and walk through the flower-garden in front of the house. And a well-kept tidy garden it was, for grandfather was fond of his flowers, and tended them with great care. It was by no means large, but it contained many of the prettiest and best-known flowers. The bloom of the crocuses, and snowdrops, and primroses was past, but there George saw red and white roses, lilies,

and wallflower, and pansies, and pinks, and the tall sweet-pea, with the finely scented thyme and mignonette, besides many others with longer names, but perhaps not any prettier.

After walking about for some time admiring the beautiful colours and graceful forms of the flowers, George suddenly bent down and called out: 'See, grandfather, what a pretty little blue flower is growing here. It is almost hid behind this bunch of sweet-pea.'

Grandfather looked. Then he sent George for the garden trowel, and dug carefully about the blue flower until he had got hold of all its roots. Then he pulled it slowly out, and flung it over the hedge.

'O grandfather, why did you pull out the pretty flower?' said George, in surprise.

'My dear boy, the flower may be pretty enough, but I can't have it growing in my garden.'

'Why not, grandfather?'

'Because it is a weed. I am very glad you saw it, George, and I shall tell you why. After that flower had faded, the seed would have come. Then the wind would have blown the seed through the garden, and next year, instead of one weed, I might have had twenty. Remember this old and true proverb:

One year's seeding
Is nine years' weeding.

Let the weeds alone and they will spread, and that very fast, until you will have more weeds than flowers, for the two cannot thrive together.'

'But,' said George, 'why were you so careful to get every bit of the root out? If you had plucked off the top, there would have been no fear of its going to seed.'

‘Perhaps not; but then the root would have been there still, and next year it would have come up stronger than ever. The only sure way is to dig out every bit of root you can find, and then it can do no more harm. Do not forget this, my boy,’ continued grandfather, ‘for weeds grow in other places besides gardens. Even in your own home in the city, you may often have to root out weeds.’

‘But that can’t be, grandfather, for we have no garden and no flowers there.’

‘No matter for that, George. There are weeds that grow up in every boy’s heart, and, if these are not looked after, the boy can never prosper. Envy and selfishness, for example, are weeds that grow plentifully, and need but little encouragement. But never, my boy, never allow them to grow in your heart, for they not only keep you from doing good to others, but they spoil your own happiness. Then there are idleness, and lying, and pride, strong, coarse weeds which, if not rooted out in time, will certainly overspread the whole soil with their tangled growth, and spoil every flower in the garden.

‘Many others I might mention, which you will find springing up in you as you grow older. Pluck them out at once, before they take firm hold. The longer they are allowed to grow, the further they spread, and the more difficult they become to pull out. Don’t merely pull off the stalk. That may conceal them for a time, but they will grow stronger afterwards. No, George, you must treat all such weeds in your heart as you saw me treat that weed you found growing here—pluck them up by the roots, and cast them from you.’

THE LOSS OF THE ROYAL GEORGE.

1.

Toll for the brave !
The brave that are no more !
All sunk beneath the wave,
Fast by their native shore !

2.

Eight hundred of the brave,
Whose courage well was tried,
Had made the vessel heel,
And laid her on her side.

3.

A land-breeze shook the shrouds,
And she was overset ;
Down went the Royal George,
With all her crew complete.

4.

Toll for the brave !
Brave Kempenfelt is gone ;
His last sea-fight is fought,
His work of glory done.

5.

It was not in the battle ;
No tempest gave the shock :
She sprang no fatal leak ;
She ran upon no rock.

6.

His sword was in its sheath ;
His fingers held the pen,
When Kempenfelt went down,
With twice four hundred men.

7.

Weigh the vessel up,
Once dreaded by our foes !
And mingle with our cup
The tear that England owes.

8.

Her timbers yet are sound,
And she may float again,
Full charged with England's thunder,
And plough the distant main.

9.

But Kempenfelt is gone ;
His victories are o'er ;
And he and his eight hundred
Shall plough the wave no more.

A SEA-DIRGE.

Full fathom five thy father lies :
Of his bones are coral made ;
Those are pearls that were his eyes ;
Nothing of him that doth fade,
But doth suffer a sea-change
Into something rich and strange.
Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell :
Hark ! now I hear them—
Ding-dong, bell.

THE SHEEP, THE THORN-BUSHES, AND THE BIRDS (1).

de-light'ful, sur-round'ed, at-ten'tion, med-i-ta'tion, ad-ja'cent,
ap-proach'ed, de-priv'ed, mis'chief, bus'i-ness, oc-ca'sion,
ar-gu-ments, vic'tor-ies.

Mr Stanhope and his son Gregory were, one evening, in the month of May, sitting at the foot of a delightful hill, and surveying the beautiful works of nature that surrounded them. The declining sun, now sinking into the west, seemed to clothe everything with a purple robe. The cheerful song of a shepherd called off their attention from their meditations on those delightful prospects. This shepherd was driving home his flocks from the adjacent fields.

Thorn-bushes grew on each side of the road, and every sheep that approached the thorns was sure to be robbed of some part of its wool, which a good deal displeased little Gregory.

'Only see, papa,' said he, 'how the sheep are deprived of their wool by those bushes! You have often told me, that God makes nothing in vain; but these briers seem only made for mischief; people should therefore join to destroy them root and branch. Were the poor sheep to come often this way, they would be robbed of all their clothing. But that shall not be the case, for I will rise with the sun to-morrow morning, and with my little bill-hook and snip-snap, I will level all these briers with the ground. You may come with me, papa, if you please, and bring with you an axe. Before breakfast, we shall be able to destroy them all.'

Mr Stanhope replied: 'We must not go about this

business in too great a hurry, but take a little time to consider it; perhaps there may not be so much cause for being angry with these bushes, as you at present seem to imagine. Have you not seen the shepherds about Lammas, with great shears in their hands, take from the trembling sheep all their wool, not being contented with a few locks only?

Gregory allowed that was true; but they did it in order to make clothes; whereas the hedges robbed the sheep without having the least occasion for their wool, and evidently for no useful purpose. 'If it be usual,' said he, 'for sheep to lose their clothing at a certain time of the year, then it is much better to take it for our own advantage, than to suffer the hedges to pull it off for no end whatever.'

Mr Stanhope allowed the arguments of little Gregory to be just; for Nature has given to every beast a clothing, and we are obliged to borrow our own from them, otherwise we should be forced to go naked, and exposed to the cold and rain.

'Very well, papa,' said Gregory, 'though we want clothing, yet these bushes want none: they rob us of what we have need, and, therefore, down they shall all come with to-morrow morning's rising sun. And I dare say, papa, you will come along with me, and assist me.'

Mr Stanhope could not but consent; and little Gregory could hardly sleep, being so much taken up with the idea of his victories, to which the next morning's sun was to be witness.



THE SHEEP, THE THORN-BUSHES, AND THE BIRDS (2).

in-differ-ent, op-por-tu-ni-ty, im-med'i-ate-ly, nec'es-sar-y,
in'stru-ment, ex-pe-di'tion, mul'ti-tude, ven'geance, in'no-cent,
con-ve'nience, pres-er-va'tion, con'quest, in-hab'it-ant.

The cheerful lark had hardly begun to proclaim the approach of morning, when Gregory got up and ran to awaken his papa. Though Mr Stanhope was very indifferent concerning the fate of the thorn-bushes, yet he was not displeased to have the opportunity of shewing to his little Gregory the beauties of the rising sun. They both dressed themselves immediately, took the necessary instruments, and set out on this important expedition. Young Gregory marched forward with such hasty steps, that Mr Stanhope was obliged to exert himself to avoid being left behind.

When they came near the bushes, they observed a multitude of little birds flying in and out of them, and fluttering their wings from branch to branch. On seeing this, Mr Stanhope stopped his son, and desired him to suspend his vengeance a little time, that they might not disturb those innocent birds. With this view, they retired to the foot of the hill where they had sat the preceding evening, and examined more particularly what had occasioned this apparent bustle among the birds. They plainly saw that the birds were employed in carrying away those bits of wool in their beaks which the bushes had torn from the sheep the evening before. There came a multitude of different sorts of birds, who loaded themselves with the plunder.

Gregory was quite astonished at this sight, and asked

his papa what could be the meaning of it. 'You by this plainly see,' replied Mr Stanhope, 'that Providence provides for creatures of every class, and furnishes them with all things necessary for their convenience and preservation. Here, you see, the poor birds find what is necessary for their nests, wherein they are to nurse and rear their young, and with this they make a comfortable bed for themselves and their young ones. The thorn-bush, against which you yesterday so loudly exclaimed, is of great service to the inhabitants of the air; it takes from those that are rich only what they can very well spare, in order to satisfy the wants of the poor. Have you now any wish to cut those bushes down, which you will perhaps no longer consider as robbers?'

Gregory shook his head, and said he would not cut the bushes down for the world. Mr Stanhope praised his son for so saying; and, after enjoying the sweets of the morning, they retired home to breakfast, leaving the bushes to flourish in peace, since they made so generous a use of their conquests.

THE BOY AT THE CANAL DIKE.

dis-as'ter, at-tempts', prop'er-ty, pa'tient-ly, ap-proach', he-ro'ic,
dan'ger-ous, cler'gy-man, po-si'tion, be-numbed', as-ton'ished,
min'is-ter, threat'ened, pre-vent'ed.

A little boy in Holland was on his way home, one night, from a village, to which he had been sent, by his mother, on an errand. As he walked along, he noticed that the water was trickling through a narrow opening in

the dike of a large canal. He stopped, and thought of the damage that might be done if the hole was not closed. He knew, for he had often heard his parents tell, that sad disasters had happened from beginnings quite as small as this. He knew that in a few hours the opening might become bigger and bigger, and let in the mass of waters pressing on the dike, until, the whole defence being washed away, the waters would sweep on to the next village, destroying life and property in their way. Should he run home, and alarm the folks of the village, it would be dark before they could arrive, and the hole might even then be so large that all attempts to close it would be in vain.

Having thought thus, he seated himself on the bank of the canal, stopped the opening with his hand, and patiently waited the approach of some person. But no one came. Hour after hour rolled by, yet there sat the heroic boy, in the cold and the darkness, shivering, wet, and tired, but stoutly pressing his hand against the dangerous breach. All night he staid at his post. At last the morning broke. A clergyman, walking up by the canal, heard a groan, and looked round to see where it came from.

‘Why are you here, my child?’ he asked, seeing the boy, and surprised at his strange position.

‘I am keeping back the water, sir, and saving the village from being drowned,’ said the boy, with lips so benumbed with cold that he could hardly speak.

The astonished minister relieved the boy. The dike was closed; and the danger which threatened hundreds of lives was prevented.

At the call of duty, I hope you will all be as patient as the little boy at the dike in Holland.

THE UNJUST SUSPICION.

em-plied', or-na-ment, ap-pren'tice, per-sist'ed, chas-tised',
de-served', dis-cov'er, sus-pect'ed.

A goldsmith was employed to make a splendid ornament for a lady, and she gave him many precious stones to set in it. Robert, his apprentice, took great delight in one of these stones, which was clear and sparkling with various hues, and he often examined it.

One day his master observed that two of the most beautiful stones were missing. Suspecting the apprentice, he searched his bedroom, and there found the jewels in a hole of the wall, behind an old chest. Robert firmly persisted that he had not taken the jewels; but his master chastised him severely, told him he deserved hanging, and turned him out of his place.

On the next day another stone was missing, and the goldsmith found it in the same hole, and now took more pains to discover who concealed it there. He soon saw a thievish bird, called a magpie, which the apprentice had trained and tamed, perch on the working-table, take a stone in its beak, and carry it away to the hole. The goldsmith now felt heartily sorry that he had done an injury to the poor lad; he took him back again, from that time treated him very kindly, and never after suspected any one so lightly.

THE MILLER OF THE DEE.

There dwelt a miller hale and bold
Beside the river Dee ;
He worked and sang from morn till night :
No lark more blithe than he.
And this the burden of his song
For ever used to be :
'I envy nobody, no, not I,
And nobody envies me !'

'Thou 'rt wrong, my friend,' said old King Hal,
'Thou 'rt wrong as wrong can be ;
For could my heart be light as thine,
I 'd gladly change with thee.
And tell me now, what makes thee sing
With voice so loud and free,
While I am sad, though I am king,
Beside the river Dee ?'

The miller smiled, and doffed his cap :
'I earn my bread,' quoth he,
'I love my wife, I love my friend,
I love my children three ;
I owe no penny I cannot pay,
I thank the river Dee,
That turns the mill that grinds the corn
To feed my babes and me.'

'Good friend,' said Hal, and sighed the while,
'Farewell, and happy be ;
But say no more, if thou 'dst be true,
That no man envies thee :
Thy mealy cap is worth my crown,
Thy mill my kingdom's fee ;
Such men as thou are England's boast,
O miller of the Dee !'



THE BUTTERFLY'S BALL.

trum'pe-ter, sum'moned, a-muse'ment, gnat, re-la'tions, plum'age,
com-pan'ion, di-ver'sion, dex-ter'i-ty, Har'le-quin, tal'ons,
min'u-et.

1.

Come, take up your hats, and away let us haste
To the Butterfly's ball and the Grasshopper's feast ;
The trumpeter Gadfly has summoned the crew,
And the revels are now only waiting for you.

2.

On the smooth-shaven grass, by the side of the wood,
Beneath a broad oak that for ages has stood,
See the children of earth, and the tenants of air,
For an evening's amusement together repair.

3.

And there came the Beetle, so blind and so black,
Who carried the Emmet, his friend, on his back ;
And there was the Gnat, and the Dragon-fly too,
With all their relations, green, orange, and blue.

4.

And there came the Moth in his plumage of down,
And the Hornet in jacket of yellow and brown,
Who with him the Wasp his companion did bring,
But they promised that evening to lay by their sting.

5.

And the sly little Dormouse crept out of his hole,
And led to the feast his blind brother the Mole ;
And the Snail, with his horns peeping out from his
shell,
Came from a great distance—the length of an ell.

6.

A mushroom their table, and on it was laid
A water-dock leaf, which a table-cloth made ;
The viands were various, to each of their taste,
And the Bee brought his honey to crown the repast.

7.

There, close on his haunches, so solemn and wise,
The Frog from a corner looked up to the skies ;
And the Squirrel, well pleased such diversion to see,
Sat cracking his nuts overhead in a tree.

8.

Then out came the Spider, with fingers so fine,
To shew his dexterity on the tight line ;
From one branch to another his cobwebs he slung,
Then as quick as an arrow he darted along.

9.

But just in the middle, oh ! shocking to tell !
From his rope in an instant poor Harlequin fell ;
Yet he touched not the ground, but with talons
 outspread,
Hung suspended in air at the end of a thread.

10.

Then the Grasshopper came with a jerk and a spring,
Very long was his leg, though but short was his wing ;
He took but three leaps, and was soon out of sight,
Then chirped his own praises the rest of the night.

11.

With step so majestic, the Snail did advance,
And promised the gazers a minuet to dance ;
But they all laughed so loud that he pulled in his
 head,
And went in his own little chamber to bed.

12.

Then as evening gave way to the shadows of night,
The watchman, the Glow-worm, came out with his
 light ;
Then home let us hasten while yet we can see,
For no watchman is waiting for you and for me.

ON MINERALS AND METALS.

min'er-als, car'riages, ce-ment'ed, quan'ti-ty, or'na-ments, vict'u-als, sov'er-eigns, con-ven'ien-ces, ser'vice-a-ble, differ-ent, gen'er-al-ly, in-gre'di-ents.

You must understand that there is not only great variety in what grows out of the ground, but even in the earth itself. Those things which are dug out of the earth are called *minerals*. Look at the walks: some of them are of a yellowish-red colour. That is gravel: does it not make pretty walks? It is exceedingly good for the roads likewise, which would soon be very bad where there are a great many carriages continually going, if they did not spread gravel upon them to keep them in repair. Of another kind of earth bricks are made, which are afterward used in building houses, walls, &c. Chalk comes out of the earth. It is very useful to lay upon some sorts of land in order to make what the farmer purposes to sow there grow the better; it is likewise burnt to make lime of, which, mixed with sand, makes mortar for the bricklayers to fasten their bricks, for they would fall down if they were not cemented together. Stone and marble are dug out of the ground. When they find a vast quantity together they call the place a quarry. Some fine churches and castles are built of stone. Marble is used for chimney-pieces, slabs, and ornaments in houses.

Coals are likewise dug out of the earth, with which we make fires to warm us and dress our victuals.

I have not yet told you half the riches that are in the bowels of the earth. Out of them are dug gold, silver, copper, lead, iron, tin; these are called metals. Look at my watch; this is gold; sovereigns and half-sovereigns

are likewise made of it, and it may be beaten into leaves thinner than paper.

With leaf-gold they gild wood ; the picture-frames in the drawing-room appear very fine, but are only wood covered with those thin leaves.

Gold is the most valuable of all metals. This shilling is made of *silver*, which, though inferior to gold, is yet much esteemed. It is used for coffee-pots, candlesticks, waiters, spoons, and a hundred other things, which people who can purchase them make use of. *Lead* is very heavy : there is great plenty of it to be had, and it is of the utmost service to us, for it is made into cisterns to hold water, pipes to convey it from the springs, gutters to carry the wet from off our houses, weights, and a variety of other conveniences. Our saucepans and kettles are made of *copper*, which would be very unwholesome if they were not lined with *tin*, which is a whitish metal, softer than silver, yet harder than lead. We have many mines of it in England, and send quantities of it to foreign countries. Pennies are made of copper mixed with tin. This mixture is called *bronze*. *Iron* is one of the most serviceable things we have : most kinds of tools that are used in the fields and gardens are partly made of it ; likewise most of those which are employed in different trades have generally some iron about them ; in short, it would take up a great deal of time to tell you the whole of its value. *Steel* is iron refined and purified by fire, with other ingredients ; it is much prized too. Our knives, scissors, razors, needles, and many articles besides, are made of it.

LITTLE ANOMIA, OR THE SEARCH FOR THE PRINCESS SEA-HAIR'S COMB (1).

A-no'mi-a, oys'ter, cu'ri-ous, gam'bol-ing, par-tic'u-lar, ap-pear'ing, prin'cess, pos'si-ble, dis-or'dered, al-to-geth'er, grot'toes, differ-ent, o-pin'ion, in-dig-na'tion.

Once upon a time, in this little shell, which is called a pearly pearl-oyster's, there lived at the bottom of the sea a curious creature whose name was Anomia. It was one of a cluster of oysters that grew in the garden of the queen of the mermaids. These oysters were at first ugly and brown, and quite common ; but the Princess Sea-hair, the queen's eldest daughter, was very unhappy, and she used to come down to that part of the garden to weep, and her tears fell upon these little brown oysters and washed them white as snow ; and sometimes, when they had their mouths open, the tears would fall in, and so became pearls, for the tears of a mermaid of the royal race have a magic power.

The reason why she cried so much was, that one day, when gamboling about with her sisters and all the other mermaids, she lost her golden comb that had been given to her by her father the king ; and as the mermaids never get but one comb, she could not keep her long hair smooth. The queen was very particular about every one appearing before her with well-combed hair, but the poor princess, though she tried by every means in her power to keep her hair smooth, and kept out of the sight of the queen as much as possible, was always being found out, till at last, her hair getting

more matted and disordered every day, she was banished from the queen's presence altogether. Instead of joining in the games with the mermaids every evening, when all the little trumpet shells blew their merry blast to announce that the hour for sport had arrived, Princess Sea-hair would hurry away to the most deserted part of the palace grounds, and, hiding in a grove of seaweed close to the garden of shell-fish, she would watch them swimming out and in, chasing each other through the openings of the coral grottoes.

One day when she had been particularly low-spirited, she cried out: 'Oh, that I could go in search of the fish that swallowed my comb, but, alas! a mermaid cannot leave the part of the sea she is born in;' and she sighed heavily. When she was gone, all the oysters and the different kinds of shell-fish began to talk about the sad fate of the poor princess, and each one asked the other if nothing could be done to help her. An old gray limpet unfastened itself from the rock, and called out to know why they made such a fuss about nothing, for in his opinion the princess deserved to suffer for not taking better care of her comb when she had it. But every one who knew the princess loved her, for she was so sweet tempered, and had been so fond of all the shell-fish in her happy days; so they were very angry with the limpet—who had only come to live there lately, and therefore did not know the princess—for speaking so unfeelingly, and he was forced at last to stick his claws into the rock again, and hold on with all his might, in case they should knock him off in their indignation.

LITTLE ANOMIA (2).

com-pan'ions, bar'na-cle, anx'ious, af-fec'tion-ate, pro-bos'cis, quan'ti-ty, col-lect'ed, com-pelled', beau'ti-ful-ly, des'o-late, fa'vour-ite, comb.

Then this little oyster, who had a very kind heart, said to the other shell-fish, that as the Princess Sea-hair could not go herself in search of her comb, perhaps they could find some one to go instead, and by asking all the fishes they met they might find it. They all laughed so much at the poor little oyster, that she became almost as unhappy as the princess, and she longed to be away from her companions. A small barnacle that had got itself fastened in a branch of seaweed close to the little oyster, whispered into its ear that it should go itself, and said if the oyster would nip off the branch on which it grew, and get on its back, that they could float away on it: this the oyster thought an excellent plan. The barnacle was anxious to see a little more of the ocean, but it didn't much care where it went, so as it saw the world, and was quite anxious to help in the search for the Princess Sea-hair's comb.

Everything was carried out as they wished; and the oyster and the barnacle left their old home when all the others were fast asleep, and were drifted away on the branch of seaweed into the deep sea. Very sorry the oyster was to leave her old home, for she had an affectionate heart; but then she was going, as she thought, on a good errand, and that kept her cheerful, even when she had to suffer many hardships, and met with great dangers. The little oyster had always a civil word to say to every

one, so that even the largest fish could not find it in its heart to harm it, and it sailed round and round the island as safely as if it had been on its old bed in the garden of the queen mermaid.

But one day a storm arose, and the poor little oyster was driven off the back of its faithful friend the seaweed, and it sunk at once on to a bank close to this shore, and was so much hurt that it expected to die at once. It opened its shell to take a good breath, when a 'whelk,' as it is called, pushed its proboscis in, and tried to draw out the poor little thing. The pearl-oyster was very weak, but it managed to dart out a quantity of water it had in beside it, and so frightened it away for that time. But it was a very spiteful whelk, and it went and collected a lot of its friends, and they set to and pierced it on every side. The oyster told them the story of the poor Princess Sea-hair, but they only laughed at it, and went on piercing its shell, till at last it was compelled to surrender itself.

But the very fish that had stolen the comb happened to be swimming past, and heard what the little pearl-oyster said, and the fish was so much struck with the kindheartedness of the oyster, that he cried out to it that he would go at once and give back the comb again, for he had not stolen it, but had found it, and the little oyster was so glad to think the princess would be happy once more, and had only time to thank the fish before it was killed outright. Then the fish took half of the shell and went away to where the princess was, and gave her back her comb, and oh, how happy she was to see it; but when she saw the half of the oyster's shell, and heard the story, she wept again as much as she did for the loss of her comb. In looking

into it, there she saw a great large pearl, but she did not know it was her own tear; so, after combing out her hair and arranging it as beautifully as she could, she fixed the pearl on her forehead, where it shone so brightly, that when she presented herself before her mother the queen, she did not know her, but thought she was a beautiful mermaid from some other part of the sea.

Ever after the princess was called Princess Sea-pearl, instead of Sea-hair, and she was so grateful to the little oyster, that she turned the place where the oysters lived into a beautiful grotto, and took charge of it herself, so that instead of it being the most desolate, it became the most favourite resort of all the mermaids. But I must not forget to tell you what became of the old cruel 'whelk.' It was so greedy that it tried to carry off the whole of the oyster's body, but the others thought this very unfair, and set upon him and killed him, and ate him up also. So the poor Princess Sea-hair got her comb, and all that is left of the little pearl-oyster is the half of its shell, that has been washed up by the sea, and left all alone upon the shore.



WE ARE SEVEN.

1.

I met a little cottage girl :

She was eight years old, she said ;

Her hair was thick with many a curl

That clustered round her head.

2.

She had a rustic, woodland air,

And she was wildly clad :

Her eyes were fair, and very fair ;

Her beauty made me glad.

3.

‘ Sisters and brothers, little maid,

How many may you be ? ’

‘ How many ? ’ Seven in all, ’ she said,

And wondering looked at me.

4.

‘ And where are they ? I pray you tell. ’

She answered : ‘ Seven are we ;

And two of us at Conway dwell,

And two are gone to sea ;

5.

‘ Two of us in the churchyard lie,

My sister and my brother ;

And, in the churchyard cottage, I

Dwell near them with my mother. ’

6.

‘ You say that two at Conway dwell,

And two are gone to sea,

Yet ye are seven !—I pray you tell,

Sweet maid, how this may be. ’

7.

Then did the little maid reply :
‘Seven boys and girls are we ;
Two of us in the churchyard lie,
Beneath the churchyard tree.’

8.

‘You run about, my little maid,
Your limbs they are alive ;
If two are in the churchyard laid,
Then ye are only five.’

9.

‘Their graves are green, they may be seen,’
The little maid replied,
‘Twelve steps or more from my mother’s door ;
And they are side by side.

10.

‘My stockings there I often knit,
My kerchief there I hem ;
And there upon the ground I sit—
I sit and sing to them.

11.

‘And often after sunset, sir,
When it is light and fair,
I take my little porringer,
And eat my supper there.

12.

‘The first that died was sister Jane ;
In bed she moaning lay,
Till God released her of her pain,
And then she went away.

13.

‘So in the churchyard she was laid ;
And when the grass was dry,
Together round her grave we played,
My brother John and I.

14.

'And when the ground was white with snow,
And I could run and slide,
My brother John was forced to go,
And he lies by her side.'

15.

'How many are you, then,' said I,
'If they two are in heaven?'
Quick was the little maid's reply :
'O master ! we are seven.'

16.

'But they are dead ; those two are dead !
Their spirits are in heaven !'
'Twas throwing words away ; for still
The little maid would have her will,
And said : ' Nay, we are seven !'

THE PET LAMB.

1.

The dew was falling fast, the stars began to blink ;
I heard a voice ; it said : ' Drink, pretty creature, drink !'
And, looking o'er the hedge, before me I espied
A snow-white mountain-lamb with a maiden at its side.

2.

Nor sheep nor kine were near ; the lamb was all alone,
And by a slender cord was tethered to a stone ;
With one knee on the grass did the little maiden kneel,
While to that mountain-lamb she gave its evening meal.

3.

'What ails thee, young one? what? why pull so at thy cord?

Is it not well with thee? well both for bed and board?
Thy plot of grass is soft, and green as grass can be;
Rest, little young one, rest; what is't that aileth thee?

4.

'Rest, little young one, rest; thou hast forgot the day
When my father found thee first in places far away;
Many flocks were on the hills, but thou wert owned by
none,
And thy mother from thy side for evermore was gone.

5.

'Thou know'st that twice a day I have brought thee, in
this can,
Fresh water from the brook, as clear as ever ran;
And twice in the day, when the ground is wet with dew,
I bring thee draughts of milk, warm milk it is, and new.

6.

'Thy limbs will shortly be twice as stout as they are
now,
Then I'll yoke thee to my cart like a pony in the plough;
My playmate thou shalt be; and when the wind is cold,
Our hearth shall be thy bed, our house shall be thy fold.

7.

'Here thou need'st not dread the raven in the sky;
Night and day thou art safe—our cottage is hard by.
Why bleat so after me? Why pull so at thy chain?
Sleep—and at break of day I will come to thee again!'

THE CHILDREN IN THE WOOD.

1.

Now ponder well, you parents dear,
These words which I shall write ;
A doleful story you shall hear,
In time brought forth to light.
A gentleman of good account
In Norfolk dwelt of late,
Who did in honour far surmount
Most men of his estate.

2.

Sore sick he was, and like to die,
No help his life could save ;
His wife by him as sick did lie,
And both possessed one grave.
No love between these two was lost,
Each was to other kind ;
In love they lived, in love they died,
And left two babes behind.

3.

The one, a fine and pretty boy,
Not passing three years old ;
The other, a girl more young than he,
And framed in beauty's mould.
The father left his little son,
As plainly doth appear,
When he to perfect age should come,
Three hundred pounds a year ;

4.

And to his little daughter Jane,
Five hundred pounds in gold,
To be paid on her marriage-day,
Which might not be controlled :
But if the children chanced to die,
Ere they to age should come,
Their uncle should possess their wealth—
For so the will did run.

5.

‘Now, brother,’ said the dying man,
‘Look to my children dear ;
Be good unto my boy and girl,
No friends else have they here :
To God and you I recommend
My children dear this day ;
But little while be sure we have
Within this world to stay.

6.

‘You must be father and mother both,
And uncle all in one ;
God knows what will become of them,
When I am dead and gone.’
With that bespake their mother dear :
‘Oh, brother kind,’ quoth she,
‘You are the man must bring our babes
To wealth or misery.

7.

‘And if you keep them carefully,
Then God will you reward ;
But if you otherwise should deal,
God will your deeds regard.’

With lips as cold as any stone,
They kissed their children small :
'God bless you both, my children dear !'
With that their tears did fall.

8.

These speeches then their brother spake
To this sick couple there :
'The keeping of your little ones,
Sweet sister, do not fear.
God never prosper me nor mine,
Nor aught else that I have,
If I do wrong your children dear
When you are laid in grave.'

9.

The parents being dead and gone,
The children home he takes,
And brings them straight unto his house,
Where much of them he makes.
He had not kept these pretty babes
A twelvemonth and a day,
But, for their wealth, he did devise
To make them both away.

10.

He bargained with two ruffians strong
Which were of furious mood,
That they should take these children young
And slay them in a wood.
He told his wife an artful tale,
He would the children send
To be brought up in fair London,
With one that was his friend.

11.

Away then went those pretty babes,
Rejoicing at that tide—
Rejoicing with a merry mind,
They should on cock-horse ride.
They prate and prattle pleasantly,
As they ride on the way,
To those that should their butchers be,
And work their lives' decay.

12.

So that the pretty speech they had,
Made murder's heart relent :
And they that undertook the deed,
Full sore did now repent.
Yet one of them, more hard of heart,
Did vow to do his charge,
Because the wretch that hired him
Had paid him very large.

13.

The other won't agree thereto,
So here they fall to strife ;
With one another they did fight
About the children's life :
And he that was of mildest mood,
Did slay the other there,
Within an unfrequented wood :
The babes did quake for fear.

14.

He took the children by the hand,
Tears standing in their eye,
And bade them straightway follow him,
And look they did not cry ;

And two long miles he led them on,
While they for food complain :
'Stay here,' quoth he ; 'I'll bring you bread,
When I come back again.'

15.

These pretty babes, with hand in hand,
Went wandering up and down ;
But never more could see the man
Approaching from the town :
Their pretty lips with blackberries
Were all besmeared and dyed,
And when they saw the darksome night,
They sat them down and cried.

16.

Thus wandered these poor innocents
Till death did end their grief,
In one another's arms they died,
As wanting due relief :
No burial this pretty pair
Of any man receives,
But Robin Redbreast piously
Did cover them with leaves.

17.

And now the heavy wrath of God
Upon their uncle fell ;
Yea, fearful fiends did haunt his house,
His conscience felt a hell :
His barns were fired, his goods consumed,
His lands were barren made,
His cattle died within the field,
And nothing with him staid.

18.

And in the voyage to Portugal
Two of his sons did die ;
And, to conclude, himself was brought
To want and misery.
He pawned and mortgaged all his land
Ere seven years came about,
And now at length this wicked act
Did by this means come out :

19.

The fellow that did take in hand
These children for to kill,
Was for a robbery judged to die,
Such was God's blessed will.
Who did confess the very truth,
As here hath been displayed :
Their uncle having died in jail
Where he for debt was laid.

20.

You that executors be made,
And overseers eke,
Of children that be fatherless,
And infants mild and meek ;
Take you example by this thing,
And yield to each his right,
Lest God with such-like misery
Your wicked minds requite.

LETTER-WRITING.

fa-mil'iar, play'ful-ness, at-tach'ed, op-por-tu'ni-ty, fa'vour-ites,
di'a-logue, Cam'bridge.

Mr Robinson was very fond of children, and used to render himself very familiar with them, by joining heartily in their little sports; and they were much attached to him. In the midst of his playfulness, however, he never let slip an opportunity of throwing out some hint that might be useful to them in after-life.

Among his little favourites were two fine boys. The elder, named John, was about ten years old, and the youngest, Robert, about eight. On one of Mr Robinson's visits to their father, Robert, being told of his arrival, came bounding into the room, and, as usual, jumped upon his knee, when they entered into the following dialogue :

Mr R. Well, Robert, so you have taken your old seat; but where is John?

R. O sir, John is gone to London.

Mr R. Indeed! how long has he been gone?

R. More than a fortnight, sir.

Mr R. How many letters have you written to him?

R. None, sir.

Mr R. How is that?

R. Because I do not know how to write a letter, sir.

Mr R. But should you like to know how?

R. O yes, sir; very much indeed.

Mr R. Then suppose you and I, between us, try to cook up a letter to John—shall we?

R. O yes, sir, if you please; I should so much like to do that.

Mr R. Well, then, let us begin : 'Saucy Jack ;' will that do ?

R. O no, sir ; I should not like to say that at all.

Mr R. Why not ?

R. Because that would be so rude, sir.

Mr R. Let us try again : 'My dear Brother ;' will that do ?

R. O yes ; nicely, sir.

Mr R. Well, then, now let us go on : 'Last Thursday half Cambridge was burned down, and '——

R. O no, sir ; that will never, never do.

Mr R. Why won't it do ?

R. Because it is not true, you know, sir ; there has not been any fire at Cambridge.

Mr R. Then suppose we alter it to 'Last night our tabby cat had three kittens.' That is true, you know, because you told it me just now.

R. (hesitatingly). Y-e-s, sir, it is true ; but yet I should not like to *write* that.

Mr R. But why should you not like to write it ?

R. Because I do not think it worth putting in a letter.

Mr R. Oho ! then, if I properly understand you, friend Robert, you think that when we write letters to our friends, we should, in the first place, never be rude ; secondly, that we must never say what is not true ; and, thirdly, that we must never tell them what is not worth knowing. Am I right ?

R. Yes, sir ; if I were to write a letter, I should try to think of all this.

Mr R. Then, my dear boy, you must never again tell me that you don't know how to write a letter ; for I assure you, you have a much better notion of letter-writing than many people who are five times your age.

LETTER FROM A BOY IN THE COUNTRY
TO A BOY IN TOWN.

*Fairy Knowe, Peebles,
June 2, 1873.*

My dear Jack,

*I wish you would
pay us a visit: the weather
is splendid, and the fields are
looking their best. I have a
spare rod and tackle for you
to fish with in the Tweed,
which, as you know, flows*

past our farm. Let me know when we may expect you. Bring your terrier for the rabbits.

Father and mother send their kind regards.

I am,

Dear Jack,

Your affectionate friend,

Robert Pairman.

To Master John Black,
Edinburgh.

S P E L L I N G.

THE MORE DIFFICULT WORDS OF TWO SYLLABLES IN COMMON USE.

a-byss'	ad-dress'	an'cient	as-suage'
ac'cess	a-dieu'	an'swer	aus-tere'
ac-crue'	a-ghast'	an-tique'	au'tumn
a-chieve'	a'gile	anx'ious	a-vouch'
ac-quit'	a'gue	ap-plause'	awk'ward
a'cre	a'lien	as-sault'	bar'gain

bar'ley	be-nign'	bus'i-ness	ca-price'
ba'sin	be-reave'	bus'y	cap'tain
ba-zaar'	bor'ough	cab'bage	car-eer'
bea'con	bo'som	cam'bric	car'riage
beau'ty	buoy'ant	cam-paign'	cas'tle
be-lieve'	bur'gher	ca-noe'	cen'tre

cha-grin'	co'coa	con-demn'	court'eous
chas'ten	co-erce'	con'quer	cous'in
chief'tain	col'league	con'science	crea'ture
cho'rus	col'umn	con-strue'	cres'cent
ci'pher	com'rade	con-tempt'	crevice
cir'cuit	con-ceive'	coup'le	crys'tal

cur'tain	de-spatch'	ech'o	en-tomb'
cush'ion	diph'thong	e-clipse'	e'qual
daugh'ter	dis-guise'	e-lude'	es'sence
debt'or	doub'le	emp'ty	ex-empt'
de-ceive'	dun'geon	en'gine	ex-haust'
de-feat'	ea'ger	e-nough'	fal'con

fam'ine	for'eign	glac'ier	half'pence
fa-tigue'	for'feit	gor'geous	ha-range'
feu'dal	fren'zy	gro-tesque'	hea'then
fi'bre	fron'tier	guar'dian	heif'er
fig'ure	fur'nace	guin'ea	hein'ous
flour'ish	gen-teel'	gui-tar'	hid'eous

host'ler	is'sue	knave'ish	lei'sure
im-pugn'	isth'mus	know'ledge	leopard
in-dict'	jour'nal	knuck'le	liq'uor
in-trigue'	juic'y	lan'guage	loz'enge
in-veigh'	ker'chief	lat'tice	lu'cre
is'land	knap'sack	le'gend	lunch'eon

ma-chine'	mar'riage	mill'ion	neigh'bour
main-tain'	mar'tyr	min'ute	neph'ew
ma-lign'	mead'ow	mis'chief	neu'tral
man'age	mem'oir	mon'arch	nour'ish
mar'gin	men'ace	mus'cle	nov'ice
ma-rine'	me'teor	nau'seous	nox'ious

nuis'ance	pag'eant	peo'ple	poign'ant
ob-lique'	pal'ace	per-ceive'	po-lice'
o'cean	pam'phlet	per-suade'	porce'lain
off'ice	par'tial	phys'ic	poul'try
on'ion	pat'tern	pig'eon	pre-cede'
o-paque'	peas'ant	pi'ous	pre'cincts

pro-ceed'	que'ry	ra'tion	re-trieve'
pro-nounce'	ques'tion	re-cede'	rhu'barb
pro-rogue'	quo'tient	re-ceipt'	right'eous
psal'ter	rai'ment	re-cruit'	rog'uish
pur-suit'	ranc'our	res'cue	rou-tine'
qua-drille'	rap'ine	re-sign'	salm'on

san'guine	schoon'er	shoul'der	sol'emn
sar'casm	sci'ence	sin'ew	spec'ial
sau'cer	sciss'ors	slaugh'ter	spec'tre
scen'ic	ser'geant	soir'ee	suc-cinct'
scep'tre	shep'herd	sol'ace	suc-cumb'
sched'ule	sher'iff	sol'dier	su'gar

sur'feit	tow'el	vic'ious	whis'tle
sur'geon	tran'sient	vict'uals	wiz'ard
symp'tom	un-couth'	vil'lain	wran'gle
sys'tem	u-nique'	vol'ley	wres'tle
ter'race	val'iant	wain'scot	yeo'man
tis'sue	ven'geance	weap'on	zeal'ous

WORDS APT TO BE MIS-SPELLED.

ei and *ie* in the endings, *-cive* and *-ieve*. As a general rule, *ei* follows *c*, and *ie* any other consonant.

con·ceive'	per·ceive'	grieve	thieve
de·ceive'	a·chieve'	re·prieve'	re·trieve'
re·ceive'	be·lieve'		

-EL AND *-LE*.LIST OF MOST OF THE WORDS IN *-el*.

an'gel	chis'el	hov'el	grav'el
bar'el	cud'gel	ken'nel	rev'el
bev'el	dam'sel	lev'el	row'el
bush'el	driv'el	lin'tel	shov'el
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chan'nel	grav'el	pan'el	trav'el
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ac·cou'tre	lus'tre	me'tre	som'bre
a'cre	mas'sa·cre	mi'tre	scep'tre
cen'tre	mau'gre	o'gre	spec'tre
fi'bre	mea'gre	rec·on·noi'tre	sep'ul·chre
lu'cre	me'di·o·cre	sa'bre	the'a·tre



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